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ABSTRACT

This report on group day care is designed to: (1) examine the kinds of group programs for school-age children which exist in Los Angeles County, (2) describe the conditions necessary for program operation, and (3) consider the issue of quality as it relates to community expansion of day care services for children of school age. The report is divided into two parts. The first part provides an overview of the range of services and programs and the community's role in facilitating and regulating centers. The type and variety of activities, social structure, adult participation, equipment, materials, and special characteristics of centers are examined. The second part of the report contains detailed case histories of various school-age day care models: (1) a publicly-sponsored children's center, (2) a publicly-sponsored welfare model, (3) a skills recreation model, (4) a program model in the black community, and (5) a small neighborhood center model. A bibliography of related references along with appendixes containing program forms and statistics conclude the report. (CS)

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714 West California Blvd.
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SCHOOL'S OUT!

GROUP DAY CARE FOR THE SCHOOL AGE CHILD

Elizabeth Prescott

Cynthia Milich

Prepared for the Office of Child Development
U.S. Department of Health, Education, and
Welfare, CB-264.....

November 1974

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The observers for this study were Elizabeth Jones, Cynthia Milich, Ede Haselhoef and Elizabeth Prescott. Ann Doczi, Dorothy Baranski and Roma Johnson participated in observing the summer programs. Ede Haselhoef took major responsibility for data processing and preparation of the manuscript. Elizabeth Jones, by her editing, did much to improve its readability.

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Pacific Oaks College
November, 1974

Elizabeth Prescott
Cynthia Milich

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PART I: LAYING THE FOUNDATION

Introduction

There is a certain ritual which is customary in launching a discussion of day care. First one cites the number of working mothers and the steady increase in this number over time. The next step is to cite the number of children needing care as compared to available slots. The resulting answer becomes "the day care problem". The discussion seldom goes beyond gross figures to look at specific relationships of incidence of employment and type of day care arrangements according to age of children. Partly this occurs so seldom because good detailed statistics are not available. In turn, the absence of good data makes it easier to ignore an important reality, namely, that the issues of providing day care change with the age of child being discussed.

In a community the ways in which day care needs can be met, typically, are quite different according to ages of children being served. Four age groups emerge as requiring services: 1) infants and toddlers, 2) preschool children, 3) primary school children, 4) children and youth from approximately age 9 to adolescence.

Most of what is now written about day care applies primarily to children in the preschool group age two to five, although increasing attention has been given to issues of infant care. Care for school age children has remained unexamined and seldom discussed, despite the fact that the typical working mother is most apt to have children of school age (White House Conference on Children, 1970).

Provision of service to school age children differs in two ways which may set it off as meriting consideration apart from care-giving services to younger children. One is the difference in developmental level which requires provision of a quite different set of experiences, and hence resources, from those offered to young children. The other is the inevitable relationship of the day care service to the school, both in terms of the fluctuation of hours which the school year imposes, and also in terms of the triangular relationship between home, school, and day care service.

In addition, staff concerned with day care of school age children find themselves in an awkward position. For many years the day care movement remained unorganized and its employees were only peripheral members of professional organizations. Recently the emphasis on early childhood has given them an active peer group concerned with the promotion and implementation of all types of early education programs.

Staff working with school age children are still isolated from a professional peer group which can provide stimulation and a sense of identification. Groups which focus on early childhood do not serve their needs; credentialled school teachers do not recognize them. Typically they do not identify with recreation workers or those giving residential care. They are isolated from the network of camaraderie and shared experiences which occupational organizations encourage, and this isolation increases their problems in gaining recognition.

It does not take long to review the literature on day care for school age children. What little there is applies primarily to group care. Family day care occasionally is mentioned, but it has received little attention as a specific resource for school age children. Except for Oliver (1970) writers have neglected issues of community planning. Limited descriptive material about good programming for this age group is available, some of it dating back to wartime Lanham Act centers (Franklin and Benedict, 1943; Harper, 1950). Office of Child Development has issued two publications which discuss developmental needs of school age children and outline areas of essential services (Cohen, 1972; Hoffman, 1972). In addition, some information on the operation of demonstration or exemplary programs which include a school age component has been provided (Abt, 1971; Caldwell, 1971). The most recent edition of the Child Welfare League Day Care Standards (1969) contains a brief (though expanded) section on care for school age children, in which standards are spelled out for features considered essential to a good day care service for this age group.

Ideal vs Real

Certainly descriptions of ideal programs and proposals for optimum standards of program operation are helpful in giving people goals and a sense of what excellence might mean for a given program. The literature is notably lacking in descriptions of the ordinary services which can be predicted to exist in communities. However, it is these existing programs which indicate what is possible at the community level, given costs of service, administrative constraints, available staff, and user demand. Ultimately, it is with these realities that any attempts at intervention must deal.

In a sense the setting of ideal standards and the establishment of demonstration programs defy reality. They concern themselves with the ultimate in desirability. If a program is highly desirable but is not occurring in the community, the probability that constraints are operating to prevent it is much greater than the probability that no one ever thought of the idea. In other words, *things that can happen will happen.*

According to the Westinghouse Westat Report (1971), only three percent of school age children presently are enrolled in known after school care of all types. The percentage of school age children in group care undoubtedly is much smaller. As these statistics indicate, the probability that a parent will enroll a school age child in a group day care program is very low (although the probability of such an event is probably greater in Los Angeles County than elsewhere).

These statistics also indicate that care for school age children is not a highly visible or well-developed service. One might postulate that organized group services to this age child would be both easier and less costly to provide, since older children are more independent of adults and need fewer hours of care because of attendance at school. Therefore, it is puzzling that this service has not multiplied as rapidly as group care for preschool children, which now enrolls approximately six percent of children under age six (White House Conference on Children, 1970). Does this peculiar state of affairs (1) reflect community neglect of a pressing need? (2) or does it indicate that parents do not find formal care arrangements, particularly those in organized group programs, a highly desirable service? (3) or does it indicate that this is not an easy service to provide?

The purpose of this report is to look for answers to these questions. Our intent is: (1) to examine the kinds of group programs for school age children which exist in the community, (2) to describe the conditions necessary for their operation and (3) to consider the issue of quality as it relates to community expansion of day care services for children of school age.

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CHAPTER I

LAYING THE FOUNDATION - THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Since so little is known about group care for school age children, this study was designed as a pilot project whose major purpose was to *get a feel for the lay of the land.* Of necessity our approach is broad and without specific hypotheses. The danger of such an approach is that a diffuse focus often leads to haphazard data collection and results in nebulous data. We have sought to avoid this outcome by establishing some theoretical perspectives to organize our decisions about what data to collect and how to examine it.

An Ecological Approach

The idea that plants and animals are inextricably bound in cycles of interdependence and adaptiveness to their particular environments has gained increasing acceptance. It is less common to find these ecological principles applied to human services. Child welfare services, for example, seldom are subject to a sober appraisal of their interrelationships to the multiple facets of community life. For one thing the complexity of these relationships is overwhelming, and attending to this complexity often seems to lead far afield from solutions which have hope of implementation. Conversely, implementation based on non-reality often fails. The approach which we have adopted here, although greatly simplified, attempts to preserve a sense of this complexity.

The sociological analysis of organizations (Selznick, 1953, 1957; Blau, 1962) is essentially an ecological approach. The approach spells out the organizational tasks and adaptive functions of organizations. It concerns itself with the basic necessities of survival. According to this approach any organization which survives and continues to meet its goals must attend to two major tasks: (1) adapt continually to its external environment and (2) maintain its internal system (Argyris, 1969).

Adapting to the External Environment

The external environment for a service-giving organization includes (1) its clientele with their needs, (2) the requirements of regulatory bodies such as licensing, building and safety, and departments of education, and (3) social and economic factors such as inflation, declining child population or racial changes in neighborhoods, gasoline shortages, etc. All of these factors affect an organization's ability to make its services accessible.

Maintaining the Internal System

The internal system develops around the staff who are employed, their relationship to each other and to the physical environment which is available. The particular adaptations required by the external environment will limit the choices which are possible in maintaining the internal system. For example, the costs of hiring competent trained staff may be prohibitive, or zoning requirements may make it difficult to locate a facility near a school. In turn such a limitation requires provision of bus service, which then requires the employment of staff members who hold a Class II driver's license, etc., etc.

The Quality of the Service

The dynamics of organizational existence just described are critical to issues of quality of service. The only program which can seriously concern itself with quality or desirability of its services is one which has survived and made itself accessible to its clientele.

Our criteria for quality are based on theoretical perspectives concerning development of school age children. Healthy childhood growth is conceptualized as following a series of developmental steps whose general features have been outlined in the psychological literature, especially the works of Erikson (1950, 1968).

The school age period is viewed as a time of identification with tasks and development of a sense of industry. For children of this age, the hours out of school need to provide opportunities for (1) developing and discovering skills, (2) using existing skills for doing and making in cooperation with others, (3) taking responsibility and (4) being in close contact with adults who represent good models of the world of work. A primary responsibility for adults during this

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period is to assist children in discovering their own talents and in gaining a feeling of competence. This role becomes especially important for children who have not found out what they can do in school and may need to discover their competence in skills which the school does not foster.

Predicting Parents' Choice-making Behavior

One conclusion which can be deduced from the statistics on group programs for school age children is that the enrollment of a child in such a program is an event of low probability. Therefore, the circumstances surrounding this event appear worthy of examination. Logic tells us that a parent can enroll a child in a program only if certain conditions exist. These necessary conditions appear to be the following:

1. The parent perceives a day care arrangement as necessary.
2. The parent knows of the existence of a day care program.
3. The child can get to the location where care is offered.
4. The hours of service fit the parent's need.
5. The parent can meet the financial arrangements.

A parent may enroll a child in a program which does not look promising if the need for care is great and other resources are not available. If, and only if, the above questions are answered affirmatively can the final question of desirability be considered, namely:

> Does the center look like a place where my child would be happy and look forward to going?

Each of these necessary conditions for enrollment of a child in a group day program points to critical issues which must be considered in thinking about day care services for school age children.

Does the Parent Perceive a Day Care Arrangement as Necessary?

This question ordinarily is not raised in regard to younger children, since there is general agreement among both parents and professionals that a child under five needs regular care by a responsible adult. For children of school age there is less agreement that a formal care arrangement is essential. Many responsible parents decide, sometime between the child's age of 5 to 9, that their child does not need a formal plan of care. A mother often asks these kinds of questions in making a decision.

1. Is the neighborhood safe?
2. Are there neighbors that my child can go to in case of trouble?
3. Will older siblings be responsible?
4. Is this child basically responsible?
5. Are there interesting things to do?
6. Can I be reached at work if needed?

A parent who can answer *yes* to most of these questions may choose not to make a day care arrangement, thus becoming a statistic in day care surveys, *leaves child unsupervised.*

In talking with mothers we have found many, especially among those who can answer *yes* to all the questions posed, who feel secure in their choice of making the child responsible and do not see day care as one of their pressing needs. Others with young or only children or living in less supportive neighborhoods or working at jobs which make them inaccessible for long periods will make this decision uneasily or only as a last resort.

Other solutions - A parent who decides that supervision is essential does not necessarily look for a formal day care arrangement. An informal arrangement may be made with a neighbor or mother of a schoolmate who sees herself as being neighborly and never thinks of securing a license for child care.

Parents also may develop a plan which they view as day care, but which would not be recognized as such by community planning groups. Day care, as it is ordinarily conceived, is a specific service which provides care and supervision. This definition means that the child is picked up by or reports to an adult who supervises his activities in the absence of parents.

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A parent of a school age child thinks of day care as a workable plan for out-of-school hours. As every parent knows, school is the cornerstone of a day care plan. The problem then becomes one of accounting for the remainder of the day. Many parents develop plans that use group facilities but would not be considered as day care services.

For example, a third grader might have the following program of surround care for a 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. school day.

Each morning -- Leave house with mother at 8:00 a.m. with instructions to walk to school slowly and get there when playground opens at 8:30 a.m.

Afternoons:

Monday -- Play on school playground (supervised by a recreation worker) until 4:00 p.m. At 4:00 p.m. child goes to an enrichment class on electricity given at school. Mother picks child up at 5:15 p.m.

Tuesday -- Child walks to Scout meeting at a home in the neighborhood. Mother of another child in the troop drops child off at his home at 5:30 - 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday -- Recreation center near school offers tumbling and gymnastics. Child walks to center and remains there until mother arrives.

Thursday -- Child stays on school playground until picked up by mother.

Friday -- Child walks to nearby library and spends afternoon in children's reading room until picked up by mother.

Each day this child takes along an extra snack for after school and carries 10¢ for an emergency phone call to his mother's place of work. Both mother and child find this an acceptable arrangement, interspersed with occasional visits to the homes of classmates. The arrangement, as described, is a day care plan based on accessibility of community activities, and a parent's knowledge that both the neighborhood and child are basically trustworthy.

Finding a Group Care Program

Hopefully other metropolitan areas have better information networks than those of Los Angeles County. The Information and Referral Service, a hot line for community service information (whose services are not particularly well known to the community), refers an inquirer to Department of Public Social Services for information on available Family Day Care, to Children's Centers 1/, to the Licensing Department for group care, and to the yellow pages of the telephone book.

Department of Public Social Services, after asking if a parent is on welfare, will give the names of up to three licensed homes according to postal zip code. For those parents who are eligible, Children's Centers are a useful referral. The Licensing Department will send a list of addresses of licensed programs, but these contain no information on which few of the long list offer care for school age children. Parents can get some information from the yellow pages of the telephone book if they look under the heading, Day Nurseries (See Nursery Schools) or Nursery Schools. Listed here are a number of programs which advertise before and after school care and proudly note that they are licensed. (Not to be licensed is, of course, illegal).

Can the Child Get to the Center?

In some American communities nearly everything is within walking distance, or can be reached easily by public transportation or school buses. These conditions do not prevail in Los Angeles County. Unless arrangements exist for private busing, many centers are inaccessible to children whose parents might wish to use their services.

1/ Programs sponsored by local Boards of Education usually located on public school grounds and governed by strict eligibility requirements.

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Do the Hours of Service Fit the Parent's Need?

A parent who works swing shift or has irregular hours will not find group care very helpful. Centers characteristically are open from 7:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. Some centers also insist that a child enroll for regular hours on a five day a week basis, a policy which tends to discourage a parent who works part time or has irregular hours.

Financial Arrangements

Group care in Los Angeles County is most financially accessible to the very poor or the affluent. Both the Department of Public Social Services and State Department of Education offer care, to those who qualify, at no cost or very minimal fees. In other types of care a parent usually must pay full cost of care, which ranges from $70.00 to $110.00 per month. During the school year, the cost of care to a parent for a child of school age is about twenty-five percent lower than for a child of nursery age; during the summer costs are about the same. Because of the rigid eligibility requirements parents slightly above the minimum subsistence level usually cannot enter a child in a reduced fee program, no matter how convenient or appropriate its services. Such parents may find the full monthly costs hard to manage.

Will This Be a Good Program for My Child?

The degree of accessibility contributes mightily to a parent's view of the desirability of a program. For example, if a program costs the parents nothing and care is needed, the child's feelings about the care may carry little weight. Conversely, if a parent is paying out of pocket $100.00 a month for care, and the child would prefer to stay with a friend at a cost ranging from nothing to $40.00 a month, the child's feelings may be viewed quite differently. As a child becomes older and more responsible, his feelings undoubtedly carry more weight.

A Guide to What Follows

The issues which have been raised in considering the accessibility and quality of services will crop up time and again throughout this report, since they create a series of constraints which determine what is possible at any given time.

The information to be presented has been obtained through interviews with staff in community agencies concerned with day care, interviews with teachers and directors in selected centers, and systematic observations within centers.

The report is divided into two parts. The first part provides an overview of the range of services and programs to be found and of the community's role in facilitating and regulating school age day care. The second part of the report provides a more detailed look at some real centers where people have found distinctive solutions to common pressures.

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CHAPTER II

THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF EXISTENCE

An Inventory of Program Types

Sponsorship of Day Care Services

Public Sponsorship - Board of Education Children's Centers are funded by the State Department of Education and operated by local school districts. This system of day care centers usually is located on school grounds. Some centers offer both preschool and school age care in the same facility. Others offer care for school age children in separate facilities. Parents pay according to a sliding scale from nothing to full cost of care. With the advent of Title IV-A funds, these centers worked out a cooperative relationship with the Department of Public Social Services, and many now enroll primarily welfare recipients.

Department of Public Social Services Centers: Money for these centers comes from Title IV-A funds through the county Welfare Department. These centers usually are created on already existing sites such as churches or facilities, some of which already have day care programs under non-profit or proprietary sponsorship. Eventually these centers may come under the jurisdiction of the State Department of Education.

Private Non-Profit Sponsorship - Unlike other metropolitan areas, Los Angeles County has little day care provided by charitable organizations. Those few centers which exist usually receive some funding from United Way. Examples of such organizations are Salvation Army, Assistance League, and various community center programs.

Churches provide most of the private non-profit day care. One reason is that churches do not need to contend with zoning regulations. In suburban neighborhoods where the commercial zoning required for day care is limited or non-existent, churches are among the few possible facilities in which programs can be housed. The chance to make use of facilities often unoccupied except for Sundays and sometimes to obtain additional income is an incentive for churches.

Proprietary - These centers are organized for profit and are governed by the same principles as any small business (Bank of America, 1973). Such centers offer the bulk of the available group care in Southern California. By far the majority of these centers offer care for preschool children only, either full day care or part day nursery school, or combinations of both. Some offer care for a few school age children, usually graduates of their preschool, as a favor to their parents. Less than five percent of these centers offer care for school age only.

Summer Programs

Most of the programs just described operate year round, adjusting their hours and daily program to fit the changing demands of the school schedule. Summer produces a broad spectrum of special programs for school age children. These programs usually exist only during the summer and vanish with the opening of school in September. They may be twenty-four hour camps, usually located in mountains or near beaches, or they may be day camps with a six to ten hour daily program.

Camps may be under all types of sponsorship. Proprietary camps are common. Non-profit agencies such as Scouts, Camp Fire Girls, Young Women's Christian Association often run both day camps and twenty-four hour camps. Both types of camps are used as day care by working mothers, sometimes for a short period of one to five weeks or for an entire summer. Parents often piece together care for the summer by using camp programs along with visits to relatives, neighborhood care, self-supervision, etc.

Of necessity twenty-four hour camps have a physical location. Some day camps operate out of an established facility, but others do not have permanent headquarters; they establish a rendevous spot or pick up children at home and spend the day at parks and beaches.

Other Programs for School Age Children

As indicated earlier, any group program for school age children may be utilized as day care by parents. The following are used by parents as day care either regularly or on an emergency basis.

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Recreation Department Programs - In Los Angeles County, local departments of recreation and parks provide youth workers to supervise programs in local parks and recreation centers. These range from playground supervision only to elaborate programs offering arts, crafts, karate, folk dancing, and other skills.

The recreation department also provides a worker for each elementary school playground to supervise (and enrich) the play during after school hours (usually 3:00 to 5:00 p.m.). Some school principals recommend the playground to mothers for after school supervision. Characteristically these programs operate without any indoor facilities and consequently do not exist on rainy days.

Private Non-Profit Programs - Private organizations funded through United Way traditionally have offered many facility-based programs for school age children. Some common examples of these programs are Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations, Community Center programs, Boys' and Girls' Clubs, Salvation Army and Catholic Youth Organization.

Miscellaneous Special Interest Groups - A variety of activities which meet once a week can be used as *fillers* in a day care plan -- Scouts, Camp Fire Girls, classes of various sorts. These sometimes meet in the school or in facilities within walking distance. Otherwise transportation becomes a problem.

Where these non-day care programs are used as day care by parents, we have found one of these three attitudes characteristic among staff:

1. Staff insist that the program is not designed to serve day care needs and makes active attempts to discourage this use. For example, a school-based recreation program, open all day when school is not in session, deliberately closes for a long lunch period to discourage use by children of working parents.

2. Staff tacitly accepts use of the program as a day care service. Directors of some programs report that they will keep informal tabs on a particular child at parent's request. Or, unlike the sample cited above, staff will decide to take turns during lunch hour to keep the program open for children who have no place else to go.

3. The program keeps very close supervision of children while they are in attendance but does not offer regular hours necessary for working parents. Service givers justify this approach by the rationale that the program offers enrichment with accompanying supervision, but that the agency is not in business to provide custodial care (usually meaning the long hours of program necessary for children of working parents).

Regulatory Supervision

All places of public assemblage must have a fire, safety and building permit, so that almost any group activity for school age children operating at an established location is subject to these minimum regulations. Programs which qualify as day care are subject to considerably more regulation, the particular form depending on sponsorship.

Regulation of Public Agency Programs

Public programs are not licensed, because this would make the operation of the program of one public agency contingent upon approval by another public agency (Class, 1968a, 1968b). Instead such programs operate under supervision of their own sponsoring agency, which is ultimately responsible to the people through the election process.

Board of Education Children's Centers are an example of a public program. These centers must abide by the eligibility requirements laid down by their State Board. Now that these centers use federal Title IV-A funds, they must also abide by federal guidelines for eligibility. Probably they also measure up to Federal Interagency Day Care Requirements, although no one at the level of program operation seems to know whether these guidelines are currently binding. The State Board of Education also establishes a certification program with career steps and minimum qualifications. At present the minimum requirements are that a director must possess a BA degree and a teacher must have at least 60 hours of college credit, at least 12 of which are in early childhood education. In actual practice many teachers have college degrees and sometimes teaching credentials.

Eligibility and basic personnel standards are established at the state level, while center operating policies are established at school district level. Thus centers vary from one school district to another. As examples of variability Children's Centers in Los Angeles city characteristically are combination preschool and school age centers. They are located on elementary

school playgrounds and do not have swings, etc. In a neighboring city, centers characteristically provide separate facilities for school age children and would never establish a center without swings.

With the advent of the Title IV-A funds, Departments of Public Social Services opened day care centers. These centers, like Children's Centers, are rigidly controlled by eligibility requirements. Currently both welfare and education department centers are available only very selectively, primarily to children of the poor. Department of Public Social Services programs are supervised by personnel from the County Department of Public Social Service office. Centers funded directly by the County Department Public Social Services try to abide by Federal Interagency Day Care Requirements for program quality, especially the requirements for adult-child ratio.

Licensing

For years all non-public preschool programs for ten or more children have been licensed by the Day Nursery Licensing Division of the State Department of Social Welfare. Recently the function was transferred to the State Department of Health and is now titled The Facilities Licensing and Certification Section of the Department of Public Health. However, the personnel and general mode of operation has remained the same, and the public still refers to it as "social welfare".

A decade ago day care for school age children was seldom encountered by licensing workers, and jurisdiction remained uncertain. Several years ago the policy was clearly established that licensing jurisdiction extends to all before and after school programs for children five years and over where the intent is to give care. If the intent is to provide recreation and the facility does not take responsibility for the care of the child, the facility is not licensed. One criterion as to whether a program gives care or provides recreation is the amount of supervision over a child's coming and going. If the child comes and leaves on his own, ordinarily the program is considered recreation. If arrival and departure are supervised, the program is classified as care.

Private elementary schools which offer before and after school care are subject to licensing. In actual practice, many schools do have some supervision for children who stay after school closing, but remain unlicensed for this function.

Licensing regulations are the same for school age as for preschool program with two exceptions: 1) Adult-child ratio is 1:12 for preschool, but 1:15 for school age, 2) amount of indoor space is 35 square feet for preschool and only 30 square feet for school age. The amount of square feet for older children is reduced to 30 square feet for three reasons: (1) older children do not need space for napping; (2) their time indoors is spent sitting at a table or playing games; (3) it is possible for a group of children of this age to be both outdoors and indoors with minimal supervision, unlike usual practice with younger children where all children are expected to be within visual range at all time.

Education requirements of the licensing department require that the director of a program must have 60 units of college credit and teachers, though working with older children, must have 12 units of course work in early childhood education.

The licensing department has no jurisdiction over programs which only meet the needs of parents for summer day care. Programs which operate only in the summer and have a physical facility are called a camp. Camps are not licensed , but are subject to health and fire department supervision. A program must have a facility to be licensed. Some summer programs and a few year-round programs do not have a facility. Instead, they have a meeting place from which children are taken to parks or to other facilities or to public amusements, and consequently, these programs are devoid of supervision.

School age children occupy an awkward place in the day care licensing regulations. They are often an appendage to a preschool program. Only a handful of facilities offer care for older children only.

In an interview, the head of the licensing department stated her concerns about care for older children:

The setting tends to be around custodial care and there are no regulations for good program for that age group. We do not know what is recommended space, what is good program and what really is an ideal ratio of adults to children. I am concerned that opportunities for quiet or for peace are ordinarily lacking, and that many children after a day of school need this sort of experience.

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Those Other Jurisdictions

As everyone who has secured a license is painfully aware, until Fire, Health, Building and Safety have approved your program you are not in business. We talked with officials from all of these agencies plus the Highway Patrol and learned why some license seekers turn prematurely gray.

Because we have encountered so many stories about difficulties in getting information a staff member placed several phone calls posing as someone interested in starting a center. This approach proved too frustrating and time consuming, just as day care operators have always told us. For future calls we introduced ourselves as doing a study on day care for school age children for the Office of Child Development in Washington, D.C. This approach got us much more efficient service.

The Fire Department - As soon as you mention school age children people seem automatically to assume that you want information about elementary schools. After making it clear that we were not talking about schools, we found that fire regulations are the same for older children as for younger children in day care. Perhaps most important here is the restriction of programs for children to ground floor facilities.

The Health Department - The interviewer notes:

Here again despite my careful explanation it was assumed that the category I was describing would fall under schools. I was told that for schools there must be one toilet for each 100 boys and one urinal for each 30 boys. For girls, there must be one toilet for each 35 girls. These must be separate toileting facilities.

I then explained that I was not talking about school, I was talking about before and after school care for school age children. The requirement for this type of care is a separate lavoratory and toilet for each sex in the ratio of one toilet to each 15 children. I asked why there was such a discrepancy between the standards required for schools compared to day care. He said he didn't know what the foundation for this was, that probably these figures are the same as those which hold for organized camps which house children twenty-four hours a day. He said that this seemed a bit high when compared to schools, but that the figures probably were lifted from camp standards.

I then asked about the requirements of separate toileting facilities. I was told that children six and older must have separate toileting facilities and that these could not be used by preschool children. I said, 'Does that mean that a four year old and a six year old could not use the same toilet?' He agreed that this seemed a bit unreasonable and said that he did not know the reason why this was required. When I asked him if this also meant that if there was only one toilet, and it was a private one, that it could not be used by boys and girls, one at a time, as would be the case in a home. He re-read the code and was somewhat uncertain, but suspected that inspectors would insist that it be separate.

He ended our discussion by saying that 'we have archaic codes and will have to redraft all of them.' To his knowledge they have not been revised in 30 years.

My informant also mentioned in addition to the recent switch of licensing from Department of Social Welfare to Department of Health, it is now proposed that health codes be state wide rather than locally mandated. It has also been proposed that care for school age children be excluded from licensing.

Highway Patrol - Since transportation is clearly important to care of school age children and since there is much complaining about its cost and about programs which get away from substandard equipment, we talked with the Highway Patrol. We learned that any vehicle designed to carry seven or more passengers plus a driver, and used to take children to or from school, must be a school bus. (Exceptions are nine-passenger station wagons used for one's own family.) A Volkswagen van, if it's designed to carry seven plus a driver and takes children to school, by law must be a school bus. The officer said that realistically, in order for such a van to qualify as a school bus, it must have so many expensive alterations that it would cost less to buy a school bus. A school bus must be yellow, meet special requirements for seating, have all the lights and arrangements for blinking, a fire extinguisher, drive shaft guards, first aid kits, etc. Anyone not meeting these regulations is in violation of the law.

Our informant said that the California Highway Patrol get calls from people in day care complaining of the regulations, saying they can't afford it, and that such and such a guy doesn't do it. Callers are offered the following advice:

If you have one of those vans with a big back seat to hold four, you can remove the back seat so that the vehicle is no longer designed to carry seven or more plus driver. Then it doesn't have to be a school bus.

Sometimes schools do this and then later put the seat back. If the California Highway Patrol catches them they either make them remove it again, or insist that the vehicle meet school bus standards.

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CHAPTER III

TAKING A CLOSER LOOK: COMMON PRACTICES

Introduction

Group day care programs can be sorted according to a variety of characteristics. Our pilot interviews indicated that programs for school age children can differ in age range of children served, goals - defined primarily as day care or primarily as enrichment, whether or not busing is provided, center size, ratio of children to adults, etc. Any of these characteristics might provide a legitimate basis for drawing a sample. In previous studies (Prescott, 1972a,b) we have found sponsorship to be a particularly critical variable because it determines both the basis for financial support and the regulatory jurisdiction. In this study again we chose to sample centers according to sponsorship because these characteristics seemed critical in determining other aspects of center life.

In this chapter we will describe some of the difficulties encountered in selecting a sample of centers and then go on to describe the patterns of services and organizational practices which we found.

The Selection of a Sample

A basic principle in drawing a sample states that you must identify the universe to be sampled (i.e., all of the centers which offer group care for school age children in Los Angeles County). This requirement presented no problem for programs under public sponsorship and hence not subject to licensing. However, the identification of licensed programs proved to be very difficult since the Licensing Department no longer records age of children served. An old list containing this information enabled us to eliminate facilities which had not been licensed for care of older children. We then telephoned the 133 new centers to see if they offered care to children of school age.

In addition, on the old list there were 178 centers which listed care to age six. We telephoned a twenty percent random sample of these centers to determine their policies and practices for children eligible for public school attendance. It became clear that the majority of these centers provided their own kindergarten, but no other care for older children. We decided not to include these centers in our sample because they had only added a kindergarten to what was essentially a preschool program using their own preschool space and program format. We did not see these centers as elucidating questions most pertinent to care of school age children.

Our final definition of school age care was that the center must care for children in first grade or above on a regular basis. This definition provided us with a total of 208 centers from which to draw our sample, 99 under public and 109 under private auspices. Within this list we proposed to draw a random sample stratified according to sponsorship and presence or absence of a combination preschool and school age program.

Our next problem was to decide on the most adequate definition of a combination center. Some centers used the same space and staff for both nursery and school age. These were clearly combination centers. Others used separate facilities, but shifted staff back and forth between preschool and school age. Still other programs which served both age groups at the same site provided for separation in both facilities and staff. We decided that a combination center would be defined as one which shared staff and facilities or shared staff only. A facility labeled as extended day care only would be defined as one with no preschool children on the premises or one where both space and staff were separate and school age children had no contact with the children of nursery school age.

Our sampling difficulties impressed upon us the multiplicity of program possibilities in school age as compared to preschool programs.

Originally, we had planned to study twenty-five centers. We raised this number to thirty because it appeared to provide the minimum necessary for an adequate sample. Using a table of random numbers we selected a sample of thirty centers stratified according to the following types:

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5 Department of Public Services Title IV-A Contract Centers 1/
5 Board of Education Children's Centers, combination preschool and school age
5 Board of Education Children's Centers, school age only
5 Proprietary centers, school age only
5 Proprietary centers, combined preschool and school age
5 Non-profit centers of any type, charitable or religious

The Interview

The director of every program in our sample was interviewed. Our interview (See Appendix A) was designed to provide information about a wide range of services and practices which have been described in publications as important in day care programs for school age children (Cohen, 1972; Child Welfare League, 1969). The interview time was from one to two hours and was conducted prior to the observation of the program.

Where Do Centers Get Their Clientele?

It became abundantly clear, as we interviewed directors, that children who have been in group day care during their nursery school years are the source of most of the enrollment in school age programs. (See Table 1). Some centers reported that their entire roster of school age children was made up of children who had been in their nursery school. Many of the centers, especially proprietary ones, had started out with a program for children of nursery age, then added a school age component because of demand from parents. Children's Centers have long offered day care for school age children and it appears that most of their school age enrollment comes from their preschool day care program. Even the proprietary centers which offered day care for school age children only appeared to be dependent on nursery school enrollments. Several of these centers were affiliated with nursery schools in other locations. Other centers received many referrals and recommendations from parents and other preschool centers in the area. Interestingly, the two centers which appeared to be having some difficulties in recruiting did not have good contacts with day care centers for preschool children in their area. In conclusion, it appears that once parents begin to make use of group care for their children, they are apt to continue to use this type of care.

Age Range Served

Although most centers are willing to serve children through the 6th grade, the number served drops off sharply by age eight. Most centers report that about 75% of their children are age eight and under, with the remainder primarily in the 4th and 5th grade. (See Table 1).

Centers which do hold children even into Junior High do so by providing a variety of skill-oriented activities, such as really good art materials and workshop tools, along with opportunities to work in an apprentice-like relationship with warm adults who seriously encourage them to help younger children.

There appears to be little discussion between parents and center directors about parents' decision to withdraw a child. Apparently most children drop out quietly at the end of the school year. Occasionally older children are reported as behavior problems and a parent is asked to withdraw them.

Waiting Lists

Waiting lists are an often-quoted, but in our experience an undependable, statistic. (See Table 1). The time of peak demand comes with the opening of school in September, and a parent needing child care may place her name on a number of waiting lists without bothering to remove them when a source of care has been located. For this reason some centers do not bother to keep waiting lists. Among those centers where lists are maintained, one-half to two-thirds report a waiting list for their extended day program at mid-year.

1/ Our final sample was reduced to four when one center first refused, then agreed to participate but arrangements for the interview and observation never could be completed.

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TABLE 1

Selected Characteristics of Year Round Programs

	Size of Center	Age Range Now Being Served	Percent of Total Enrollment - School Age	Cost of Care of School Age per Hour	Own Transportation	Adult/Child Ratio	Male Staff Members	School Age Staff Employed All Day
CONTRACT CENTERS - DPSS								
A.	97	2.5-11	65%	$2.22	yes	1:10	yes	some
B.	50	3-11	60	1.86	yes	1:10	yes	some
C.	25	3-12	12	2.05	trips	1:5	no	yes
D.	68	3-12	80	.89	trips	1:7.5	yes	yes
BOARD OF EDUCATION CHILDREN'S CENTERS EXTENDED DAY								
A.	96	5-9	100%	$.70	trips	1:7	yes	some
B.	73	5-11	100	1.67	trips	1:10	yes	some
C.	26	5-8	100	.84	no	1:9	yes	some
D.	32	5-12	100	.84	no	1:10	no	some
E.	55	5-11	100	1.47	no	1:7	no	some
CHILDREN'S CENTERS COMBINATION								
A.	70	3-12	41%	$.62	trips	1:7	no	yes
B.	79	2.5.10	68	1.05	trips	1:9	yes	some
C.	136	2-12	64	1.04	trips	1:10	yes	some
D.	76	2-10	50	.96	trips	1:7	yes	some
E.	123	2-8	41	1.47	trips	1:8	yes	some
PROPRIETARY - EXTENDED DAY ONLY								
A.	45	5-10	100%	$.78	yes	1:12	yes	some
B.	42	5-9	100	.76	yes	1:11	yes	some
C.	55	6-8	100	.79	yes	1:15	no	some
D.	50	5-11	100	.70	yes	1:11	yes	no
E.	50	5-12	100	.90	yes	1:15	yes	some
PROPRIETARY EXTENDED DAY COMBINATION								
A.	54	2-7	16%	$.68	no	1:12	no	yes
B.	100	2-8	21	.78	yes	1:15	yes	some
C.	125	2-9	24	.55	no	1:10	no	some
D.	12	2-10	75	.75	no	1:10	no	yes
E.	53	2-11	34	.53	no	1:12	no	no
PRIVATE - NON-PROFIT								
A.	150	5-14	100%	$.35	no	1:19	yes	no
B.	69	2-8	43	.70	trips	1:15	yes	some
C.	13	5-8	100	.60	no	1:5	yes	some
D.	32	2-7	46	N.A.	trips	1:9	no	some
E.	44	2-7	29	N.A.	trips	1:12	yes	some

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TABLE 1 (continued)

Selected Characteristics of Year Round Programs

	Waiting List	Counseling Service	Amount or quality of School Contact	Help Children with Homework
CONTRACT CENTERS - DPSS				
A.	yes	own	extensive	no
B.	50	no	some	N.A.
C.	yes	other	extensive	occasionally
D.	yes	county	extensive	yes
BOARD OF EDUCATION CHILDREN'S CENTERS EXTENDED DAY				
A.	no	other	close	yes
B.	80	other	extensive	occasionally (really parent responsibility)
C.	9	own	close	yes
D.	10	other	extensive	yes
E.	no	other	very supportive	yes
CHILDREN'S CENTERS COMBINATION				
A.	no	other	extensive	occasionally
B.	yes	other	extensive	N.A.
C.	100	own	close	occasionally (if asked)
D.	20	own	extensive	no
E.	no	no	extensive	N.A.
PROPRIETARY - EXTENDED DAY ONLY				
A.	no	no	fairly good	some
B.	20	no	some	some
C.	no	no	some	no
D.	no	no	good	no
E.	no	no	extensive	yes
PROPRIETARY EXTENDED DAY COMBINATION				
A.	no	no	some	no
B.	N.A.	no	some	occasionally (if important to parents)
C.	no	no	very close	occasionally
D.	7	no	none	no
E.	N.A.	no	extensive	no
PRIVATE - NON-PROFIT				
A.	no	no	N.A.	no
B.	12	no	N.A.	no
C.	no	other	frequent	yes
D.	38	own	good	no
E.	no	own	bad	some (especially if parent doesn't speak English)

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What Do Parents Want?

Most directors report that parents visit the program, at least briefly, at time of enrollment. There are of course questions about hours and costs. However, as directors reminded us, many of these parents have had their children in group care programs before they were school age, so they know most of the answers. The most commonly reported question asked by parents was whether or not children will nap. (The answer usually is yes, if in kindergarten;no, if older). Another common question was about the activities which were available, especially outdoor activities and opportunity to move about. 2/

Range of Services Offered

Health Care

Standard-setting groups characteristically emphasize the importance of health care services. Program directors did not appear particularly concerned with this aspect of care. In contrast with directors of services for preschool children, almost all school age program directors reported that they considered the elementary school responsible for basic health screening and maintenance of records. Children's Centers sponsored by school districts characteristically depended heavily on the public school and used the school nurse for a referral in case of any kind of health questions. Proprietary centers, as stipulated by licensing requirements, are supposed to require a physical exam upon enrollment in the program. In actual practice, we found that many centers considered enrollment in public school as satisfying this requirement.

We did find two variations in answers which appear noteworthy. One was a Title IV-A program housed in a community center which included a medical clinic as part of its service. This program made good use of the clinic because of its accessibility. Staff and parents could really see to it that children received prompt medical care instead of the common practice of referring parents to a clinic which required them to drive a long distance and then to sit for hours waiting for attention.

The other example was a proprietary program in which the director functioned much as a patriarch of an extended family. He does take the physical exams very seriously; he often makes it a point to make contact with the family doctor, and he carefully watches for any indication that a child should receive medical attention. For parents who work long hours he may make the appointment with the doctor and follow through to be sure that everything is attended to.

What About Illness A perpetually unsolved problem in group day care is what to do with the child who is ill. Directors identified three kinds of problems. One is the common minor illness such as the child with a cold. Here, we found the standard practice is to pretty much ignore it unless the child has a fever, or perhaps to offer a modified program of activities like chances to lie down or to curl up quietly with a book. Virtually everyone said that any child with the symptoms of a contagious disease, running a high fever, or clearly seriously ill must be excluded from care no matter how disruptive this might be to the parent's work life.

Another relatively common problem is the child who complains that he does not feel good enough to go to school or has the school call saying he is not feeling well. A number of directors reported that this was sometimes a problem in the early part of the school year. Many directors try to live with it and occasionally accommodate a child who really needs to stay in the center and whose parent could not afford to stay home.

A few directors have found that the elementary school tends to use the center as a dumping ground for children who are not well. In some cases the director has told the school to deal directly with the parent and not to call the center. Other directors consider that an important part of their day care service is to meet emergency needs which arise once the child has been placed in their care. Such directors will make a special trip to the school and pick children up no matter how great the inconvenience.

Emergency Care Closely allied to the question of health are procedures in case of accident. In case of emergency, we found that everyone seemed to have an emergency hospital where they might take children if necessary. Those centers which provide regular transportation for children must

2/ These appear to be good questions. Parents experienced with day care arrangements know that naps imposed on children who don't need them will result in 10:00 p.m. bedtimes, and too much sitting makes children hard to live with at home.

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employ drivers who have a first aid certificate. In centers where no transportation is provided first aid certification was less common.

All centers regardless of sponsorship were exceedingly careful to receive a parent medical consent form; however, only one director made a point of emphasizing the importance of keeping the medical consent form in the same location as the child. He cited an example: *Suppose I have taken the children into the mountains for an outing during spring vacation and, God forbid, we have an accident. What good would it do me to be in the mountains with an injured child and a medical consent form back in my desk in the office?*

Food Service

Every program in our sample provided a snack for children after school. This appears to be a universal practice regardless of the type of program. Provision for other kinds of food service is much more variable. All Title IV-A programs offered breakfast. Virtually none of the other programs provided breakfast as an official part of their service, but many do it unofficially. For example, several directors said that they always kept dry cereal around for children who had gotten up too late to have breakfast. Other centers routinely permitted children to make toast if they wanted it before school. Most school age children eat lunch at school, although some Children's Centers which have their own cook arrange for children to return to the center for lunch.

In Children's Centers one of the problems with lunch service provided at the center is that many children do not like to be separated from their schoolmates. However, some younger children sometimes like and need to get away from the school for a brief time. Both Children's Center staff and the children whom they serve seem to agree that the food which is served in the center is often of higher quality than that which is served in the school cafeteria. An interesting example of flexibility was found in a few centers which left the decision up to the child. He could either eat in the school cafeteria or come back to the center for lunch.

Centers without facilities for food preparation serve only milk or juice and have children bring their own lunch. Apparently, directors do not see food service as a major problem in providing care for school age children, although practices do vary between combination centers, which ordinarily employ a cook, and school age-only centers, which characteristically do not.

Social Services

All Department of Public Social Services Title IV-A centers provided social services. Some saw these services as part of *the welfare package* and not particularly important in helping families. Others found that it did give them someone to call when a problem needed attention.

The availability of a social worker to Children's Centers was less predictable and depended both on the policies of the sponsoring school district and the persistence of the director in making use of them. One center reported an excellent relationship between parents and social worker. A number of parents make appointments to talk with her and she also has good attendance at group meetings.

Proprietary centers do not provide formal social services. However, the directors we interviewed were quite knowledgeable about the services of community agencies and many reported at least one referral. Social services available through the schools also were called to parents' attention. Confident, authoritative directors appear to provide families with a good deal of practical help and advice, especially regarding child-rearing.

Transportation

The question of the location of the center with respect to the school which the child attends turned out to be a very important issue in determining the cost of a program, its staffing and its possibilities for providing certain kinds of enrichment. Centers could be divided into three groups according to their accessibility to transportation. (See Table 2).

Buses Always Available One group includes centers which maintain their own buses and transport children to and from school. All proprietary programs which provided day care only for school age children maintained their own fleet of buses. In addition two of the Title IV-A centers maintained their own buses.

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Several predictable consequences stem from the fact that a center operates its own buses. One is that some children will spend a good part of their time before and after school riding a bus. This is particularly true for those centers which pick children up at their own homes. It is possible that children who are picked up early and happen to attend the school which is one of the last drop-offs may spend a minimum of an hour or more on the bus riding around while children are picked up and dropped off. This feature may be a great convenience to the parent and may work to the disadvantage of some children; however, there is another side of the coin. Centers which have buses invariably take a number of trips during spring vacation and in the summer time. It is easy for them to get to parks, swimming pools, and to places in the community which are of interest to children. At least this was true during the year before the gas shortage appeared. If the price of gas continues to rise and supplies become increasingly limited, this aspect of program might be altered radically.

Buses Sometimes Available A second common pattern is that the center does not have its own buses but can requisition them occasionally for a trip. This is common practice for Board of Education Children's Centers. Usually this means that if you carefully plan months ahead, you can count on taking a trip to the ocean or to the mountains on days when the schools are not in session. Often these trips must be paid for out of the center budget, and this means that a trip is an expensive luxury which can not be afforded very often. It is perhaps a measure of the adequacy of a center budget when a director says that they can afford to take a trip once a week during vacation and summer time.

Buses Not Available The third alternative is that a center does not have a bus and cannot afford to rent one. Their only transportation lies in their ability to walk or to use public transportation (which is virtually non-existent in Southern California). Often centers which can not provide any transportation found that this lack automatically ruled out swimming lessons or any kinds of trips away from the center.

Virtually every center which we visited was staffed by a director and teachers and other adults who drive their own cars to work. We found that in the past many of them used their cars, as needed, to take small groups of children to the store to buy supplies or on picnics, to the beach, or to a local park. Over the years insurance companies and school district legal departments have made it increasingly difficult for this practice to continue. Time and again directors told us that this form of transportation made for a very workable and enriched program, and they really regretted being forbidden to use their own cars.

Transportation turned out to be a very important dimension of care for school age children. Where it was provided regularly its provision became a large part of the operating budget, a source of continued headaches, and an opportunity to provide considerable variety and enrichment. Where it was not offered, children were often confined to the same physical location week after week and sometimes year after year. Many of the experiences which we take for granted for school age children were automatically ruled out in centers which had found no way to get their children out into the broader community.

Supervision of Homework

Out of the 30 centers, seven directors said, yes, they did help with homework, and seven said no, they did not. The remainder gave some type of qualified answer indicating that it was done occasionally or only if the parent requested it. (See Table 1). We saw very little help with homework as we observed in centers. It happened informally in centers in the morning, often in a helping relationship between children. Several centers had a time when a staff person announced his or her availability, but only one of these centers appeared to make much of a ritual of it. Most staff seemed to feel that the center time was non-school time and that it was inappropriate to push school tasks. Others noted that they feel that it is important for the parents to supervise homework.

Program Goals as Described by Directors

In answer to the question about program goals we received a wide range of replies which seemed to defy any attempt at classification. Here are some examples:

Because they study so hard - plenty of bodily exercise.

Give children the kind of care they need to have - keep them safe, warm, more like second home to many.

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A happy group of children. We are not concerned with education - that is the school's business.

Christian behavior, not indoctrination - just to have respect for one another - learn to treat each other well.

Close the gap with school... A sense of identity and good exposure so they will get something out of school.

Give maximum of choices, autonomy.

To meet and accept every child where he is - love him first and teach him second.

To us the most striking thing about most of the answers we received was the shift away from the academic and cognitive emphases which have been such prominent goals in many day care programs for preschool children. Program goals, as described, seldom mentioned parent involvement; however, many centers apparently had this as an important goal.

Parent Involvement

Parent involvement differed markedly among programs. Perhaps the easiest to summarize are those programs where it could be characterized as low and business-like. Except for an occasional problem and exchange of necessary information, parents had little contact. Perhaps 20% of the centers fell in this category.

About 60% fell into a mid-range of involvement characterized by numerous friendly chats, a good deal of informal discussion with the director about school, developmental stages, and just plain visiting. Usually formal meetings were not regularly scheduled although there might be a yearly event planned for parents.

About 20% could be characterized as high involvement. Here are some examples of the variety which high involvement can take:

A center holds a weekend retreat for staff, families, and children, where goals for the year are established.

Coffee and comfortable place for parents to sit and visit with the director and with each other. Encouragement of parent friendships and cooperative solutions to problems.

Director visits regularly in homes with parents, has known many of them for five or more years, is clearly viewed as a family resource for the rearing of children.

The director reports that the parent advisory council does all of its own planning. Their spring fair and dinner for parents had a turn-out of over 300. At this time children sold things that they had made during the year and made enough money to pay for special treats and for trip money for children whose parents did not have it. The parent advisory council also took reels of movie film, which would be shown for parent meetings.

Home-School-Center Relationships

Only one director (of a very small program) in the sample reported no contacts with the elementary school which her children attended. (See Table 1). All others reported a range of contacts, from occasional calls about children with problems to fairly regular daily exchanges about the child in care.

The one factor which stands out as critical to school-center relationships is distance. Where centers bus children to a number of schools, the relationships which develop appear somewhat more distant and occur mainly around problems. However, directors in centers which bus children do make a point of introducing themselves to school personnel every year to insure cooperation with drop-off and pick-up.

Neighborhood-based centers, both non-profit and proprietary, have long-standing relationships with the school, sometimes stemming from the fact that center personnel have had their own children enrolled in the school. Children's Centers, which are usually located on school grounds, often start each year by inviting elementary school teachers to tea. Staff usually become well acquainted with kindergarten teachers since they see them daily when picking children up.

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Since the director in the centers is much more accessible to parents than the teacher at the school, directors often become a sort of go-between for parent and teacher. A parent who has a problem with the school often will discuss it with the director first. In like manner the school personnel may approach a director before making contact with the parent. When the center director is knowledgeable, this role of go-between apparently can be a useful one.

Staffing Practices

In looking at staffing we wanted to find out more about practices in regard to hours of work, education of staff, use of men and adult/child ratios. We found that all of these staffing variables clustered somewhat into patterns. (See Table 1). There appear to be four patterns which are common:

1. The staff work an eight-hour day, spending the morning with preschool children and switching in the afternoon to school age. Often this type of scheduling is fitted into the napping hours of preschool children and their decreasing numbers as the day progresses. This type of staffing can occur only in combination centers and is somewhat less likely to use men. Its use does not seem to be related particularly to educational qualifications of staff or to patterns of adult/child ratio.

2. The staff work an eight-hour day, but only with school age children. Consequently even where children go to schools that have split shifts or unusual hours, this pattern gives the staff about two hours of planning time during the day. This pattern is usually associated with staff who have had some special training in working with children. Centers which use this type of staffing often employ men, and the adult/child ratio is apt to be favorable.

3. Staff work part time in split shifts. For example, staff members may come in the morning from six to nine and then return in the afternoon from two to six, and they are only in the center at the time the children are out of school. This type of staffing pattern is most apt to use women who live in the neighborhood and can easily return home between shifts. Such staff is not apt to have much formal education although those employed often have a long history of mothering, teaching Sunday School, etc. Men are less apt to work in this type of program and the adult/child ratio is not particularly favorable.

4. The staff work part time, usually in the afternoon. This type of staffing most typically employs college students. Many of them are well qualified, though young, and it is very common to find male staff members.

Formal Training and Its Usefulness

At present there appears to be much less clarity about what is good preparation for workers with school age than for workers with preschool children. We found a great deal of diversity in educational backgrounds of staff. There are staff who have had considerable course work in working with young children, but who say that this has only limited usefulness in working with older children. Some people have had elementary school training and say that this is helpful to them in understanding this age group and in handling some discipline problems, but that the activities are very different from those of an elementary school. Apparently, it is uncommon to find people with recreation training working with school age children.

It seems to be the consensus of directors and staff that formal schooling in the area of early childhood or elementary education, as they are most apt to find it, is of limited usefulness in working with children of school age. Those who have worked with Scouts or in recreational programs feel that there is a great deal of carry-over in experience from such programs. As both directors and staff see it, there are two real problems in working with this age group. One is thinking of things to do and really knowing resources, particularly developing the kinds of activities which hold long time interest and will have educational benefits. The other big problem is discipline. In center after center, directors and staff said discipline was the really tricky thing in working with school age children as compared to younger children; that you had to give a great deal of freedom and also to set limits that you knew you could enforce.

Male Staff Members

It is much more common to find men working with older children than it is with younger. Two-thirds of the centers in this study had some male staff members. (See Table 1). Programs for school age children only and those where children were bused predictably had male staff members. Male staff were least likely to be found in combination centers where the primary emphasis was on

preschool children. Although men are beginning to be used more with young children, it is still unusual for men to be full time staff members in a program geared primarily to preschool children.

Adult/Child Ratio

Adult/child ratio is an emotional and hard fought issue with younger children. To our surprise it did not seem to be the area of as much attention or concern for school age children. The state Licensing Code requires one adult to fifteen children for school age. In actual practice, the staff in most centers, even in proprietary centers, quoted a ratio which was slightly below this maximum. (See Table 1).

Even in centers which operate closer to the upper limits, there are factors which make the ratio easier to maintain. For example, in programs which provide transportation it is common for bus drivers to be included in the ratio. In actual practice the drivers are off-site for a considerable part of the day, but they also have children with them, usually in lesser numbers than 15, so that the overall ratio works out adequately. In combination centers, some of the younger children are beginning to leave later in the day as school age children arrive, so here again the adult/child ratio can be met without much strain.

From our point of view adult/child ratio did not seem to be the problem here that it is with younger children. The times that we felt strongly that there were too many children and not enough adults were in programs attached to private schools where the supervision was sometimes limited to policing of the playground. The question of adequacy of staff is closely tied to richness of program resources, a topic to be discussed in the next chapter.

A Final Note on the Cost of Care

The reader may find the differences in cost of care startling. (See Table 1). These costs are to be taken with a grain of salt because it is impossible to get clean cost-accounted data. The figures quoted for Department of Public Social Services centers come from yearly negotiated contracts and probably are reasonably accurate. Cost of care in Children's Centers is the hourly figure quoted by the district. However, neither of these agencies differentiates between cost for preschool and school age programs. The increased number of children to adults should reduce the hourly cost for school age children, unless staff are paid and space is held empty during that portion of the day when children are in school. 3/

Cost figures for proprietary centers are derived from the fee schedule for parents without any attempt to figure profit or loss. Although fees charged to parents may appear to be a very inaccurate way to assess costs, our hunch is that these fees give a fairly accurate picture of program cost. The figures for non-profit centers probably are the least dependable of all those quoted, because scrounged services, gifts and donations tend to be taken for granted and are not built into a formal budget of these programs.

Both public centers in school districts and non-profit centers often get services for which they do not pay. In contrast, Department of Public Social Services Contract Centers appear to pay for everything, sometimes including social services which do not necessarily add to program richness. The provision of retirement and other fringe benefits to staff also increases costs for Department of Public Social Services Contract Centers and for public centers. Such benefits are seldom found in non-profit centers and are virtually non-existent in proprietary centers except for those required by law.

Clearly, there is a need for some accurate data on costs of care for school age children. It is surprising that even school districts which have provided this for nearly thirty years do not have a basis for looking at costs of school age care.

Conclusion

We did not attempt a precise statistical analysis of the inter-relationship of variables discussed in this chapter, but there do seem to be certain consistencies that are worthy of attention. The three potent variables which appear to organize other aspects of the program are: (1) whether the center is a combination center or for school age only, (2) whether transportation is offered and (3) the hourly cost of care.

3/ Some districts have worked out ingenious arrangements for preschool compensatory education classes to be held at the center in the morning, thus making maximum use of staff and space.

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1. Combination versus only school age When a day care center offers care to both nursery school and school age children and characteristically uses its teachers to work with both age groups, it is less apt to have male staff. There will also be differences in program, which we will discuss in the next chapter. Also a center of this type will almost certainly have a cook. When there is a cook there is predictably a kitchen. It usually makes sense to make as much use of the cook as possible; therefore, the center is apt to offer lunch and encourage children to eat at the center.

2. Transportation A center which offers transportation must employ at least a certain number of staff who are licensed to drive a school bus. Bus drivers are apt to be male staff members. During the school year both morning and evening program will be closely tied to the exigencies of bus schedules, and during vacation the buses will be predictably available for trips.

3. Cost of care As the cost of care rises, one of the biggest differences is that staff for school age children are likely to be employed for the full day and given some planning time. Adult/child ratio is apt to be more favorable, and there are more likely to be auxiliary services such as health care, social and psychological services and things like in-service training or staff development. Such facilities have a kitchen, an adequate transportation budget and money for equipment and supplies.

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CHAPTER IV

TAKING A CLOSER LOOK: PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN

Introduction

Since there is so little information about what school age day care looks like, a major goal of this project was to investigate the daily program in this type of day care. We started out with these basic questions: (1) How do children spend their time; (2) What kinds of activity do they engage in? (3) Are there marked differences among programs in the range and type of activities in which children engage? (4) If such differences are found, are they related to center characteristics such as quality of space, cost of care or other characteristics? (5) Does there appear to be a basis for describing quality in program for school age children?

To answer these questions we developed an observation schedule which provided information about type and variety of activities, social structure, adult participation, equipment, materials, and spatial characteristics of the facility in which the activities were occurring.

How We Looked at Children: The Observation Schedule

Since we wanted to know what children were doing, the observation schedule was designed to provide information about the program as it was utilized by children. The basic unit of observation was the activity setting, defined by the social structure, a physical place (with its contents) and an activity which brings structure. Some examples of activity settings are: four boys playing Monopoly, three girls on traveling bars, one boy reading a book. A sample of all the activities going on in a center at any one time would account for the involvement of every child in the center.

Activity settings were divided into three basic types: (1) out of activity, (2) limited range activity, (3) full range activity. These were defined as follows:

Out of Activity: The child is not engaged in a focused playful activity.

In transition Child is between activities, i.e., moving about, waking up from nap, watching momentarily.

Self-care Child is attending to personal needs; examples: drinking water, tying a shoe, eating, going to the bathroom. These are momentary activities, not part of the planned activity structure. (Note: if eating is a planned group activity, it is coded eating).

Horsing around Child is poking, punching, teasing, wrestling. The social action is exploratory, usually physical, unplanned and unfocused.

Watchers Child is watching something other than an activity involving children; examples: adults sorting clothes for a rummage sale, a fire engine going by.

Restriction Child or children are withdrawn from activity by adult.

Limited Range Activity: Child is engaged in an activity which is primarily responsive and/or an activity which does not bring him into long range involvement with materials.

Watching TV or movies

Eating as an activity Children are sitting in a group at regular snack time, breakfast, lunch, at regularly designated tables.

Reading Children are looking at books, reading, or being read to.

Listening Children are listening to records, to a speaker. (Note: if listening to a book being read, code as reading).

Conversation - discussion Children are talking together; may range from short term informal chatting to discussion. Formal group discussion regarding task implementation is coded work.

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Full Range Activity: The child is participating in an activity which brings him into involvement with materials and variation in input by both the child and the adult. All activity descriptors are coded.

Academic home work Child is doing academic tasks, preparing home work; examples: working in workbook, handwriting, or any assigned school work.

Doing work Engagement in a task which has functional significance; it furthers the function of the group and maintenance of the setting, focus on product. Examples: serving snacks, putting away cots, baking for a group, washing windows, cleaning up, etc.

Exploring Open-ended involvement with materials or people that involves testing, tinkering, investigating, where the goal is open. Examples: messing with magnets, lenses. If the goal is clear and task has functional significance, code as work; i.e., baking a cake.

Construction with commercial materials Use of standardized materials for construction. Examples: building with tinker toys, crystal climbers, lego blocks, models, kits, etc. Carpentry or construction with non-standardized materials is coded as arts and crafts.

Arts and crafts Drawing, painting or constructing a product out of raw materials. Examples: paint of all types, crayons, weaving, paper mache', carpentry.

Sports Body involvement, usually large muscle, with some kind of focus. Examples: swinging, hopscotch, merry-go-round, ball playing, etc.

Games Small muscle involvement in an activity which has some organized pattern of rules. Examples: checkers, card games, Monopoly, jack straws.

Dramatic play Taking roles or acting; examples: house and family play, play with small props such as plastic animals and cowboys, puppets, putting on shows.

Music, dance Child is singing, playing instrument, dancing.

Activity Segment Descriptors

Activity setting descriptors were developed to describe the features of an activity segment. All activity descriptors were used with full range activity settings. For limited range activity settings only social structure and adult initiative were coded. Children who were out of activity were coded only for social structure. The following descriptions were developed:

Social Structure

Number of children involved
Number of lookers
Number of adults

Amount of Adult Initiative

1. Little or no preparation required; examples: uses outdoor playground as is, turns on TV.
2. Some pre-planning; examples: sets up games on a table, gets out balls, jump ropes.
3. Much planning; examples: has all materials for making paper mache animals, supplies for making cookies including cookie cutters and decorations.

Activity Age Level 1/

1. Nursery school - age two - four; examples: play dough, doll corner.
2. Nursery - kindergarten - age four, five; examples: number and alphabet games, simple card games.
3. Early school age - age six - eight; examples: Monopoly, baseball.
4. Later school age - age nine - thirteen; examples: full-fledged basketball, game with rules, chess, use of power saw.
5. Work performed by all ages; examples: washing dishes, wiping table.

Continuity

1. Little -- activity has no particular ending or is completed immediately; examples: swinging, playing with a toy truck.

1/ Age level is used to describe the approximate age when the activity characteristically is first encountered or enjoyed.

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Continuity continued

2. Some -- activity has delayed completion and often a definite end point; examples: baking a cake, playing checkers.
3. Much -- activity carries over from one day to next; examples: making clay animals, firing and painting them, putting on a dinner or carnival, gardening.

Amount of Child Initiative

1. Little -- child accepts structure, child does not show purposeful choice, no judgment required or follows simple direction; examples: child sits down to watch television supplied by adult, casually goes to swings.
2. Some -- child recognizes and deals with a series of constraints; examples: playing Monopoly, checkers, baking cookies.
3. Much -- child shapes it and controls activity; examples: supervising party arrangements, building an involved carpentry project.

Equipment, supplies

1. Usual -- found in most programs; examples: balls, crayons, sandbox.
2. Some unusual -- not typical of basic supplies; examples: cake decorating kit, plaster of paris.
3. Elaborate -- expensive or pre-planned; examples: ice cream freezer, sewing machine, soldering iron. A wide range of art supplies carefully assembled for a project.

Adult Know-how

1. Little -- no adult know-how required -- children can and do organize the activity without help; examples: coloring, sand play, house play.
2. Some -- requires some adult input to make workable; examples: relay games, sand-lot baseball, help with a cooking project.
3. Much -- adult provides special skills; examples: swimming, knitting, silk screen print.

Descriptors of Physical Space

Characteristics of the physical space were coded on the day that the observations were made. (See coding sheet, Appendix B)

Insulated Units -- small areas, usually insulated on three sides, which provide insulation or "protection" for a small group of children (will easily contain 3 - 4 or more children).

Private Spaces -- Closely cozy "hidey" spaces, which usually have room for two children at the most, and where it is hard for the occupants to be seen.

Amount of Storage

0. Not pertinent
1. No storage cabinets, no equipment
2. Sparse equipment, limited supplies
3. Basic equipment and supplies found in most centers
4. Well supplied, above average
5. Unusually large amount of supplies and equipment

Availability of Storage

0. Not pertinent
1. Closed, not available to children
2. Some available, most closed
3. Some available, some closed
4. Most storage areas accessible
5. Everything out and available

Order of Storage

0. Not pertinent
1. No order apparent, storage patterns unclear
2. Some pattern apparent, but order not followed
3. Some order, some areas unclear or conglomerate storage
4. Basic organization clear, defined
5. Exceedingly well organized, everything has its place

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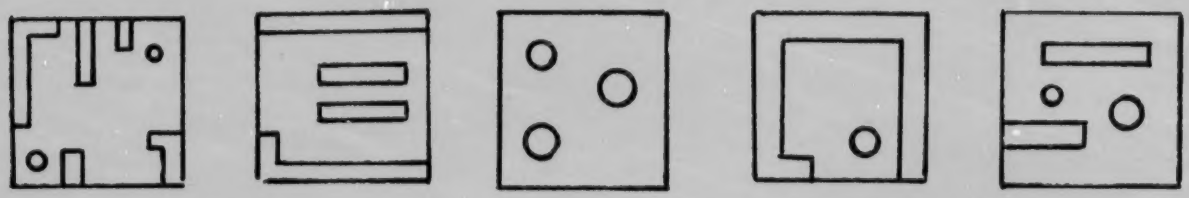
Indoor-Outdoor Availability

0. Not pertinent
1. Both indoor and outdoor are always available
2. Indoor and outdoor are never simultaneously available
3. Other (describe)

Arrangement



1. Insulated area
2. Straight line
3. Circumscribed activity area
4. Open area
5. Mixed

Softness

Indoors	Outdoors	Indoors and Outdoors
Rugs	Swings	Animals
Pillows, mattresses	Sand	Affectionate touching; example: teachers hug, touch children, permit lap sitting
Cozy furniture	Dirt	Other
Other (explain)	Trees	
	Grass	
	Other	

Procedures

During the school year four samples of children's involvement were recorded for each center, one in the morning before school and three in the afternoon. An example of a typical observation is included in Appendix C). The afternoon samples were taken approximately thirty minutes apart; however, our intent was not to sample precisely according to the clock, but obtain three representative samples of children in activity. In summer three samples were taken during one morning. As described, every child was accounted for in each sample and was recorded according to the activity in which he was involved. These procedures yielded a sample of 1642 activity settings in 29 centers distributed as follows: Winter morning, 168; Winter afternoon, 647; Summer, 472. An additional 355 activity settings were obtained in a sample of 16 recreation programs which met in summer only.

Inter-Observer Reliability The reliability of observers was checked by examining the percent of agreement between observers on paired observations. The mean percent of agreement for eleven paired observations was 81.1%, (See Appendix D).

Data Analysis The SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) programs were utilized for data analysis (Nie et al, 1970). The basic unit for analysis was either the activity setting or the center program as specified.

Findings: What Do School Age Children Do In Group Care?

The Activity Settings of School Age Day Care

Our observation schedule was designed to account for every activity which might be found in

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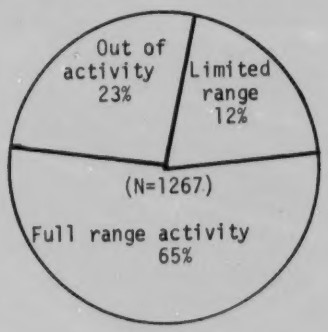
group care. The frequency of occurrence of activities for all centers looked like this 1/.



Out of Activity		Limited Range		Full Range	
In transition	8.0%	Conversation	7.0	Sports	18.0%
Horsing around	4.0	Reading	2.0	Arts and crafts	11.0
Self-care	4.0	Eating	1.0	Games	10.0
Watching	2.0	Listening	1.0	Dramatic play	9.0
Restriction	2.0	Watching TV	1.0	Exploring	7.0
Other	3.0		12.0%	Doing work	5.0
	23.0%			Construction	2.0
				Music, dance	1.0
				Academic, homework	1.0
					65.0%

As can be seen from this diagram, the most frequently occurring activities are sports, arts and crafts, games, dramatic play and being in transition. Activities of lowest occurrence are watching TV, academic homework, eating (as a formal activity), listening (to records), music and dance and being restricted.

Social Structure

The incidence of social groupings for the 995 limited and full range activities was as follows:

child alone	28.0%
two children	27.0
small group (3 - 5)	30.0
large group (6 - 10)	15.0
	100.0%

Ninety percent of the activities did not involve an adult. Twenty-four percent had one adult involved and three percent had two or more adults.

Does Time of Day Make a Difference?

Time of day does make a difference in the occurrence of some activities. (See Appendix E). Events that occur significantly more often in the morning are:

academic homework
watching TV
less adult involvement
activities requiring little adult initiative
activity age level (9-13)
(examples: checkers, chess, homework)

1/ In looking at these figures the reader needs to keep in mind that these percentages describe the frequency of occurrence of these activities and not length of time children spend engaged in them. Consequently, an activity which lasted for a long time and absorbed a large group of children (like watching a movie) would be tallied as one activity the same as one child in transition or three children jumping rope.

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Those events occurring with significantly higher frequency in the afternoon are:

sports
activities with some continuity
(examples: games, cake baking)
adult provides know-how

In the mornings adults typically were involved in the logistics of getting children off to school, and in keeping the level of activity generally low and calm 2/. Adults' role in the afternoon was distinctly different. Adult involvement with children was much higher and often directed toward raising the activity level of children and fostering large muscle activities.

Some Comments on These Findings

A group day care setting for children of school age has quite a different structure from typical elementary school classrooms with their large group activities and absence of choice or freedome to move about. The structure of the care setting nearly resembles that of an open classroom with its variations in social structure and use of the teacher as facilitator. The day for a child in school typically forbids horsing around, day dreaming and other forms of non-activity. It also imposes adult supervision on all aspects of the child's day in school. It is probably appropriate that before and after school program should offer some change from these school-imposed regularities. Nearly one-fourth of the behavior observed in centers fell into the category of a "non-activity" i.e., in transition, horsing around, self-care, etc. The relatively high incidence of these behaviors often comes as a shock to people who have envisioned a much tidier and efficient execution of a program.

Two aspects of the social structure seem noteworthy. One is the relatively high incidence of solitary play and two-child groups as compared to the occurrence of large group activities. The other is the unobtrusive role of the adult; three out of every four child activities occur with no adult involvement.

Does the Activity Make a Difference?

Activities are the building blocks of program. Every activity which we observed was described according to its content or purpose (a sport, a game, dramatic play, etc.) its social structure and the input from child, adult and equipment. We wanted to know if there were any underlying patterns which could be identified, patterns which might elucidate some of the interrelationships between content name and activity descriptors. A factor analysis of the 1642 activities produced four factors:

Factor I: Simple Activities

	Loadings
Little continuity	.81%
Usual equipment, supplies	.77
Little adult know-how	.76
Little adult initiative	.58
Little child initiative	.55
Activity age level (2 - 4)	.49
Sports	.42
Activity age level (4 - 5)	.28

2/ It was most unusual to observe morning activities which permitted large muscle use. It might be argued that since children will be sitting all day and often deprived of even the exercise of a walk to school, physical activity should be encouraged.

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Factor I appears to describe a variety of activities which occur easily and without much effort in a group setting. These activities do not require much in the way of equipment, supplies, time or adult input. Since the only activity name to appear in the factor is sports, it appears that many of these activities have a large muscle component. Examples of activities which fit this description are casual ball play, riding tricycles, swinging, playing in the sand. Simple activities characteristically are concerned with the doing and do not have a product or a sequence of steps which lead to completion or a stopping point.

Factor II: Involvement vs Non-Involvement of Adults

	Loadings
More than one adult	.83
Some adult know-how	.46
Much adult initiative	.43
Much adult know-how	.37
Much continuity	.36
Some adult initiative	.35
Arts and crafts	.33
Large group (6 - 10 children)	.31
Extra large group (11 or more)	.30
Little adult know-how	-.37
LIttle adult initiative	-.40
No adult involvement	-.83

Factor II describes the relationship of adults to the activity. Apparently adult involvement is associated with descriptors which are indicative of complexity in activities. Arts and crafts activities apparently are the most likely to require large amounts of adult input to get them started and to see them through to completion. Examples are needlepoint, knitting, making clay pots, silk screening, carpentry and sewing projects.

Factor III: Goal Directed Activities

	Loadings
Some continuity	.68
Some child initiative	.63
Activity age level (6 - 8)	.51
Games	.45
Small group (3 - 5 children)	.42
Some unusual equipment, supplies	.40
Little adult know-how	.32
	.32
Child plays alone	-.42

Factor III appears to describe the characteristics of activities which have a definite beginning and an end that can be achieved by following a set of prescribed steps. Examples are a wide variety of games such as Monopoly, Parchesi, etc., or other activities such as baking a cake, building a model. Apparently, these activities are characteristically social.

Factor IV: Work

	Loadings
Doing work	.97
Activity age level, work appropriate across age	.96

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A minor factor is related to activities which were classified as work. These activities fell into a separate factor, primarily because we coded work as not characterized by any particular age level. (For example, setting the table may be done by a child of any age and it is still useful work.) Work, by its nature, tends to be goal directed.

The Building Blocks of Program

These factors indicate certain constellations of activities upon which program can be built. Simple activities require some physical space, a minimum of supplies such as balls, wheel toys, climbing equipment, etc. and little adult involvement. These minimums apparently do not produce long term involvement or high levels of initiative, but do provide for large muscle use and casual open-ended involvement.

Another type of activity is characterized by high levels of adult involvement. Activities of this type require considerable adult-initiative and skill and elicit a good deal of long-term involvement from children. Apparently arts and crafts activities are most often characterized by such involvement, but it can occur with other activities as well.

Activities which are characterized as goal directed provide another dimension. Games and sports which have rules fit this description. Such activities are highly social, require child initiative and also are dependent on a good supply of well-maintained equipment.

If the reader will recall the pie graph at the beginning of the chapter, about 35% of the activity found in a center will be of a limited or transitional nature (i.e., watching TV, talking, horsing around, getting a drink of water). The remaining 65% of the action becomes the activity settings which provide the anchor pins for the program.

Whether a program can be anchored in one direction or another depends on the resources which can be marshalled. Our data indicate that the key resources are adults with know-how and task involvement or goal-directed games with the necessary equipment and supplies for completion. Where these resources are not available the program will end up with a large number of simple activities and brief involvement by children.

In the next section we will look at the way in which children's observed activities can jell into program types.

Are There Differences in Program Among Centers?

In the preceding section we have tried to provide some general information about what can be expected when children and adults get together in settings which have the purpose of before and after school care. In other words, we have looked at the ways in which all settings are alike. In this section we will look at the ways in which programs were different and will describe some distinct program types which emerged.

We did a factor analysis of the observation data on the 29 centers, and found three factors which highlighted six program types. The data which the factor analysis produced fitted well with our observers' more global perceptions of program differences. The factors are as follows:

Factor I: Simple vs Complex Activity Program

	Loadings
Little adult initiative	.55
Activity age level (2 - 4)	.50
Little adult know-how	.39
Little continuity	.36
Out of activity	.32
Arts and crafts	-.31
Activity age level (9 - 13)	-.42
Much continuity	-.43
Work	-.47
Elaborate equipment, supplies	-.49
Much child initiative	-.50

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Factor I: Simple vs Complex Activity Program

continued

Small group (3 - 5 children)	-.52
Good space 3/	-.54
Much adult initiative	-.59
Much adult know-how	-.65
Activity age level (6 - 8)	-.65
Some adult initiative	-.66
Some unusual equipment, supplies	-.66
Some continuity	-.75
Adults involved in activity	-.76
Some adult know-how	-.79

This factor describes the differences between programs which provide a play area (usually used by preschool children during most of the day) and very little else, as compared to a program which undertakes to provide an enriched program geared specifically to school age children. Of all the factors this was the strongest, and it most clearly differentiated between programs whose main goal was to provide a safe play space with supervision from those programs with the broader goal of providing for a wide range of needs and interests.

Factor II: Large Muscle vs Small Muscle; Outdoor vs Indoor Program

	Loadings
Little child initiative	.79
Sports	.73
Out of activity	.39
Work	-.36
Children do not play alone	-.39
Some unusual equipment, supplies	-.41
Watching TV	-.54
Dramatic play	-.56
Games	-.69
Some child initiative	-.88

The second factor highlighted the differences between programs which emphasize an outdoor sports program, with organized baseball, basketball, elaborate relay races and so on, as opposed to centers which do not include a heavy sports component. Programs strong on organized sports characteristically have a fringe of non-participants and disinterested "waiters". These reluctant or impatient participants account for the high loading on out of activity. Programs which do not focus on developing skill in sports tend to do more indoor, small muscle activities and provide settings safe from intrusion where children can get involved in activities without interruption.

Factor III: Large Group Activities vs Absence of Large Group Activities

	Loadings
Out of activity	.58
Extra large group (11 or more)	.55
Elaborate equipment, supplies	.43
Reading	
Constructing with commercial materials	-.43
Activity age level (2 - 4)	-.44
Child alone	-.58
Little adult intiative	-.62
Usual equipment, supplies	-.70
Little adult know-how	-.71
Little continuity	-.75

3/ Good space was a variable created to describe centers where both indoors and outdoors were simultaneously available, where at least eight of the softness indicators were present, where storage areas were accessible, where organization was basically clear and where room arrangement contained at least one insulated area.

The third factor was a minor one and appears to highlight the difference between programs which organize large group activities and those which do not. Large group activities, such as putting on a play or holding a planning meeting, inevitably produce an unoccupied fringe of children who are out of the activity or horsing around. The program which selects large group activities will look somewhat different from a program which encourages solitary activities with low adult involvement, such as reading or setting up a barnyard with small plastic figures.

In summary, these factors do appear to describe the ways in which group programs can polarize. Programs which remain simple and perhaps could be operationally described as custodial are characterized by low adult involvement. Such programs may emphasize either large or small muscle activities. Simple programs do not ordinarily attempt organized large group activities because these require sustained adult involvement.

Apparently, complex activity programs with high adult involvement and good resources can polarize along either the (1) large or small muscle dimension or (2) the individual or large group dimension. Our case studies will describe in more detail how these programs look when they choose to emphasize any particular program possibility.

The Question of Program Quality

In Chapter I we described the developmental needs of school age children which we would use as our yardstick for assessing quality. (See pages 3,4). According to our conception of developmental needs of school age children, a good program should provide opportunities for:

1. Developing and discovering skills
2. Using existing skills for doing and making in cooperation with others
3. Taking responsibility
4. Being in close contact with adult models

We did observe programs which provided these opportunities to children. Such programs are well-described by Factor I, Complex Activity Programs. These programs provided activity settings which have the following characteristics which we propose as indicators of quality:

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high levels of child initiative
activities which are appropriate for older children
continuity
social structure of a small group -- as indicator of social cooperation
adults involved in the activity
adults who display initiative and know-how

Programs which did not provide for these developmental needs appeared at the other pole of Factor I as Simple Activity Programs. Such centers could be labeled as lacking in quality as defined:

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large numbers of children out of activity
activities for children of nursery age
little continuity
little adult initiative or know-how

It is unusual, in Simple Activity programs, to see a child belittled or ridiculed, as can easily happen in a classroom. In this sense, these programs are not necessarily harmful. Their deficits lie in their inability to provide for the developmental needs of school age children. Such programs do not encourage any kind of sustained attention or involvement of children with activities, with each other, or with adults.

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Are Differences in Program Related to Center Characteristics?

We have proposed that centers which offer complex activity settings, as described, have programs of high quality. The presence of these indicators of quality was associated with the presence of three program supports: (1) adults with know-how, (2) good space, and (3) unusual equipment and supplies.

Adults may have close involvement with children, but unless they have know-how they cannot easily provide opportunities for children to observe and learn new skills, nor do they make good models for children of this age.

Good space provides for indoor-outdoor accessibility, so that choices are available and children can decide whether to be inside or outside. Good space includes softness for comfort, insulated areas to protect from intrusion, and storage, so that there are places to keep unusual equipment and plenty of supplies. Furthermore, good program, even when it involves the most skilled adults, does not occur in a vacuum. It is grounded and held together by good space where activities can occur, and by objects -- the supplies and equipment which are essential to the activity. These objects need a place, called storage. Tasks with a purpose grow out of these kinds of spaces, and learning to order and control the space to keep the tasks going becomes another dimension of complexity, that of maintaining, in cooperation with others, a workable living space.

Quality and Cost of Care Staff, space, equipment, supplies are all resources which cost money. Our data show a definite relationship between program quality, as defined, and resources. That we do not find a clear relationship between quality and hourly cost of care is due both to the absence of accurate information on program costs and to the variety of ways in which some centers in our small sample managed to pull resources into their program even though they did not have money to command these resources. Conversely, some well-funded programs were forced to use money for things which did not increase program resources.

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CHAPTER V

SUMMER IS A WHOLE NEW BALL GAME

Introduction

As every working parent knows, there is an abrupt shift in gears at the end of the school year and a new plan has to be undertaken. We wanted to know more about this transition from the school year to vacation time. Some of the questions which we wanted to answer were 1) Do children stay in the same day care placement or do they switch or drop out of group day care in the summer? 2) Does the center program change in the summer and in what ways? and 3) What other group programs does a community provide in the summer which could be used as day care?

Carryover From the School Year

All of the centers where we had observed in the winter continued their day care programs in the summer except for three which were designed primarily for preschool children. These three centers did not continue to serve the small group of school age children who came there while school was in session. One private elementary school also closed its day care with the end of the school year.

Among the centers which remained open the year around, carryover in enrollment was very high (see Table 2). Forty-six percent of the centers had at least 90% of their winter enrollment carryover to summer and 37% of the centers had 75 - 90% continuing, while only 17% reported fewer than 75% of their children continuing.

Hourly fees during the summer remained very much the same as in winter. A few centers increased their hours, but did not up the fee proportionately. However, one conclusion was inescapable: that summer day care, because of the increased number of hours, is costly for parents. This consequence forced on our attention another unanticipated feature of summer day care for school age children, namely, that large numbers of school age children of working parents end up in summer school. We did not anticipate this circumstance, and so the question about summer school attendance was not built into our interview. Out of 22 centers where we did ask, 36% reported that over one-half of their children attended summer school (see Table 2). In some centers so many children attended that it was then required of everyone. Another 40% of the centers reported that from 20 - 50% went to summer school. Two centers did not permit summer school attendance because it interfered with trips and other scheduled activities.

Summer school provides an especially viable solution for parents who use Children's Centers housed (usually) on school grounds. Since fees are computed by hours in attendance, enrolling a child in school markedly reduces the number of hours in day care. The school system then foots the bill for time in care instead of the parent.

When it became apparent to us that summer school was increasingly used by working (and non-working) parents as a place for children to spend time and not as a remedial or educational program, we were curious how school officials might view this use. Interviews with school officials at administrative levels indicated that they were vaguely aware that working parents were using summer school as child care, although they were cautious and hesitant to label it as such. When assured that we wouldn't quote him, one well-placed official explained that money would never be appropriated for summer school if it were described as a child care program, but since most children who attend do not need a remedial program, teachers often are encouraged to do lots of art and go easy on the traditional approaches to academics.

Summer school has some good reasons for existence apart from its services to children. It is viewed as a financial plum by many teachers; it gives the school system some additional funds and a time when teachers can try new things. Consequently, school officials choose to look the other way, and have some reason to welcome the use of summer school for day care. They just don't want it advertised as such.

In local schools we found principals who "ordered" the Children's Center to enroll its children in summer school. A district office representative, in response to questions about this practice, said, *Well, the principal probably was down in attendance and needed to increase his enrollment.* (Attendance determines the money available.)

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TABLE 2

Characteristics of Summer Programming in Year Round Centers

	No Summer Program	Percent Carry-over Spring to Summer	Percent Children Who Go To Summer School	Cost of Care of School Age For Summer Program	Swimming: Daily - Has Own Pool	Swimming: Weekly - Use School or Recreation pool	Swimming: Sometimes - Arrange for Private Pool Use	Swimming: No Swimming	Trips: Own Bus	Trips: Hires Bus	Trips: Walks	Trips: No Trips
CONTRACT CENTERS - DPSS												
A.		96%	20%+	$2.22		x			x		x	
B.		100	33	1.86				X		X	X	
C.	X	--	--	---	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
D.		est 95	16	1.47		X			X		X	
BOARD OF EDUCATION CHILDREN'S CENTERS EXTENDED DAY												
A.		100%	05%	$ .70		X					X	
B.		97	56	1.67		X				X	X	
C.		85	25	.84		X				X	X	
D.		80	35	.84		X				X	X	
E.		est 25	75	1.45				X			X	
CHILDREN'S CENTERS COMBINATION												
A.		65%	83%	$.62				X			X	
B.		97	90	1.05		X				X	X	
C.		93	32	1.04		X				X		
D.		90	90	.96		X				X	X	
E.		80	100	1.47				X				X
PROPRIETARY - EXTENDED DAY ONLY												
A.		est 95%	24%	$.62		X			X			
B.		85	20	.55	X				X			
C.		81	0	.79				X	X			
D.		80	0	.85	X				X			
E.		est 41	7	.70	X				X			
PROPRIETARY EXTENDED DAY COMBINATION												
A.	X	--	--	----	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
B. (no interview)												
C.		94%	30%	$.55			X				X	
D.	X	--	--	----	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
E.		100	100	.53		X				X	X	
PRIVATE - NON-PROFIT												
A.	X	--	--	----	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
B.		est85%	5%	$.70				X	X			
C.		75	25	.55				X		X		
D.		50	5	.50		X				X		
E.		80	57	.25				X	X			

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At another Children's Center, the director reported that the center children planned a trip to Marineland and the parents of center children enrolled in summer school decided that they wanted their children to go too. When their children were absent from summer school, the principal was very put out and came over and complained.

Center directors had mixed feelings about the use of summer school to provide child care. They felt that if the school concentrated on enrichment programs different from the school year, it could provide variety in the summer day for children who had good feelings about school. But there was concern for children when they were forced to go and were taught by teachers who pushed a heavy academic program.

The Mechanics of Summer Program

Perhaps the best way to give the reader a flavor of summer in school age day care is to begin by describing the things which day care staffs have mentioned as the good things about summer.

What are the Good Things About Summer

By far, the most frequently mentioned good quality about summer had to do with the difference in its departure from the rigid scheduling of winter. Nearly half of the centers described a summer program which was relaxed, individualized and permitted freedom and a camaraderie between staff and children. The freedom from time constraints seemed to be the major feature which was responsible for this change. One almost needs to see a winter program in action to realize the degree to which time constraints and the schedule of the public school dominate the program. In the summer, when this rigid time schedule is not operating, everyone seems to switch over to a different system of relating. When the removal of time constraints is also accompanied by a reduction in the number of people using the facility, the resulting change in atmosphere is striking. For example, if a site includes Head Start or Compensatory Education programs, or if the facilities are located on public school grounds, the disappearance of these programs for the summer makes a big difference for the day care program.

Another difference that was described in nearly one-third of the centers was a change in activities, with more trips and special activities such as swimming or picnics in the park. Here again the switchover to new kinds of sensory inputs appears to contribute to feelings of well-being and camaraderie.

Is There Really a Difference Between Summer and Winter Programming?

Since staff reports indicated a marked change in the climate of a program from summer to winter, we were curious whether the reported changes would show up in our observational data. Our observation scheme called for a return visit during the morning hours in the summer, usually from 9:00 a.m. to about 11:00 a.m. In the summer we did not systematically observe in early morning or late afternoon, the hours used for the winter program. The difference in time observed, therefore, requires some caution in interpreting our findings. However, our data indicated that teachers were correct when they said that summer was more relaxed and led to more long term involvement in program activities (see Appendix F).

In summer as compared to winter the following things happened less often:

children out of activity
children engaged in limited range activities
children involved in large muscle activities
children with no adults present
activities where a child played alone

In summer the following things happened more often:

activities labeled full range
work
games
activities with adults present
large group activities
activities characterized by much planning
activities judged to have more continuity
activities involving elaborate equipment
activities requiring adult know-how

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These differences appear to describe a shift from large muscle, short term activities with limited adult-child involvement and a good deal of time spent by children fooling around and not getting involved, to high involvement by children and adults in complex activities of long duration.

Opportunities for Swimming and Trips

It is hard to get through a hot summer without some opportunities to swim or go on trips. Table shows the frequency with which these opportunities were available. Proprietary centers for school age only often had their own swimming pools on the premises. Of the 21 centers without a pool, about 60% were able to make arrangements for once a week swimming at a school or recreation department pool. The rest did not include swimming in their summer activities.

Proprietary centers serving school age only were also most likely to have buses at their disposal daily. Most public centers had some access to buses for hire. However, buses sometimes turned out to be available for perhaps one trip during the summer. Realistically, without a bus, a center must rely on access by foot or public transportation if children are to get out of the center. This fact of life should be a powerful argument for locating centers close to community facilities such as museums and recreation areas.

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Staffing

During the summer, staffing patterns do not appear to change radically. In those centers where school age staff work a full day all year, in summer they simply have more contact hours with children and less time for planning. In centers where staff characteristically work only when school age children are on the premises, the pattern for summer is to switch these people to a full day. This extension of the day seems to work particularly well in those centers that employ college students as their part time help during the winter. It is very common for centers under public or non-profit sponsorship to add NYC (Neighborhood Youth Corps) workers to their summer staff.

In general the summer staff tends to be slightly larger because of young people who may be employed, and specialists brought in to teach swimming skills or arts and crafts. The expansion of program appears to produce some strain on the regular winter staff. They work more hours, they work longer hours, there is less time for planning and more time spent in daily interaction with children. If, in addition, they have to supervise new and young staff, this is an added burden. A number of directors have said that young people are really great in their interactions with children, but they are not as dependable nor used to working long hours like the older staff members.

A problem discussed by conscientious directors was the real difficulty in finding planning time for staff. They saw planning as the key to keeping children interested and involved for the long summer. In one center which has worked very hard over the years to provide quality program the staff meets after the children leave in the evening. The director encourages and facilitates pot-luck suppers and tries to make the time a relaxed one for staff. It is during the dinner hour that they do all of their planning. In other centers planning simply does not occur. Several directors said that at one time or another they had tried organizing themes. They reported that themes tended to work well and to keep children interested and involved, but that development of such themes and the procurement of supplies and materials simply took more time and planning then staff could manage. It appears that a very real problem for summer program is scheduling staff time that is necessary for really creative enriched program.

Problems of a Summer Program

The problem most often described (at 40% of the centers) for summer programs is that of keeping children busy, most especially older boys. As our data on enrollment practices indicated, many of the older children have been at the same facility since they were preschool age. It is difficult to provide that much challenge and variation of experience in a single facility over a long period of time. Boys, especially, seem to hanker for more challenge and variety. They

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would welcome chances to get out into the community, to explore on bicycles, and to poke around and perhaps build tree houses or forts with friends. It is this very kind of activity which is most difficult for group care to provide. The long summer day is often too hot for the organized sports which hold interest during the school year. What to do clearly is a problem for the staff.

The second biggest problem has to do with staff and the logistics required to be sure coverage is adequate without wearing everyone out for the long day. If a center counts on its regular staff to work longer hours during summer, these staff sometimes find that they wear out with the extra demands. If the center supplements by using young people such as NYC workers or college students, there is then the problem of being sure that they can handle the responsibilities given them and have adequate supervision from more experienced staff.

Some school districts require that regular staff must take vacations only in summer. This regulation complicates staffing problems in centers where vacation for their regular staff must be scheduled during a period where children are there all day and new summer staff are somewhat unsure of themselves. Another type of staffing problem occurs in programs where children are transported to a variety of activities such as swimming lessons, parks, etc., and staff logistics must be juggled to meet these schedules.

Nearly 15% of the centers described heat as a problem. Such centers do not have air-conditioning, often have yards which provide no shade and are located in areas plagued by smog. It is in these centers that staff report the greatest need to have transportation provided. The absence of transportation also was reported as a problem.

Two centers which served primarily a Mexican-American population described problems which seemed to stem from the family-oriented nature of the culture. In one center summer attendance was described as erratic with children staying home most unpredictably, to visit with relatives or to do things with older siblings. The other center, located in a community center, seemed to serve as a magnet for the community and the day care staff had to cope with older siblings, teenagers and young people in general, hanging around the center. As a solution many of these young people were incorporated into the program and put to work, but the number involved simply exceeded the capacity of the center to deal positively with them.

Other Options for Parents: Summer Only Programs

A parent looking for summer day care has options other than the year round day care programs. In the summer there is a burgeoning of activities for young people offered by city recreation departments, non-profit youth-serving agencies, private day camps, and of course, the public summer schools.

Out of these possibilities we chose 16 programs in which to observe and to interview. These programs were a mixed bag of purposes, services, hours and costs. We finally sorted them into three types based on our perception of the program as it was experienced by the children.

A Place to Go These programs specialized in offering a place. There were sometimes opportunities for skills, trips, and often real fun, but the emphasis was not on skill building, individualization or opportunities to explore the world. It was primarily a place to be that was supervised and offered social opportunties. We placed a YW program, some recreation department and community center programs in this category.

Skill Building Programs concerned with skill building. This included all of the summer school programs as well as other programs which taught use of tools, techniques, physical skills, such as Girls and Boys Clubs.

Exploring the World A third group also provided a place to go and some opportunities for building skills, and in addition placed great emphasis on exploring the natural and/or social world. Along with this there was a concern for establishing a sense of identity in the child. Some day camps and a community center program fell in this category.

Table 3 provides a summary of the costs, services offered and a rating on dimensions of warmth, flexibility, individualization and fun which probably would determine a child's liking for the program. As the reader can see, costs and services varied markedly among programs.

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TABLE 3

Characteristics of Summer-Only Program

	Cost Per Day	Transportation To and From	Legnth of Day	Age Range	Meals	Amount of Equipment	Freedom to Choose	Field Trips	Situational Discipline	Staff Warmth	Flexible Schedule	Individualization	Amount of Fun
A Place to Go													
YWCA	1.42	-	full*	6-12	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	-	0
City Recreation Dept. A	1.00	-	full	5-11	-	0	0	-	0	-	-	-	0
Catholic Boys Club	free	-	short	5-11	-	0	+	0	0	0	+	0	0
Non-profit Day Camp	7.20	+	short	5-15	-	0	0	0	+	0	-	0	+
City Recreation Dept. B	free	-	full	all	-	+	+	0	+	+	+	0	+
CAtholic Day Camp	free	-	short	5-12	lunch	-	0	-	+	+	-	-	+
Non-profit Community Center	free	-	full	all	lunch	-	+	-	+	+	+	0	-
Skill Building													
Girls Club	free	-	full	6-18	-	0	+	0	+	+	+	+	+
Elementary School A	free	-	half	5-11	-	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+
Private Day Camp A	7.65	+	short	5-13	-	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	+
Boys Club	free	-	half	7-18	-	+	+	0	+	0	+	+	+
Elementary School B	free	-	half	5-11	-	-	0	-	0	0	-	0	0
Elementary School C	free	-	half	5-11	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	-	-
Exploring the World													
Private Day Camp B	10.00	+	short	5-11	-	+	+	0	+	+	0	+	+
Jewish Community Center	6.78	+	full	6-12	snack	0	0	+	+	+	0	0	+
Private Day Camp C	5.00	-	full	7-9	lunch	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+

* full day, eight or more hours
short day, five to eight hours
half day, four or less hours

\+ above average
0 average
\- below average

What We Observed: Summer-Only Programs vs Day Care

We observed one morning in each of these programs. There appeared to be some consistent diferences between the day care and the summer-only programs. In the summer-only programs the following things happened more often:

time in transition
limited range activities (such as watching TV)
academic homework
large group (6 - 10 children)
much adult initiative
activity age level (6 - 8)
some continuity
elaborate equipment, supplies
much adult know-how

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The following things occurred less often in summer only programs:

dramatic play 1/
little adult initiative
activity age level (4 - 5)
little continuity
usual equipment, supplies
little adult know-how

These data were useful to us in sorting out some of the differences among programs for school age children.

Age Certainly one difference among programs to keep in mind is age. Children in all-year day care are somewhat younger than children who use many of the summer-only programs. Although many of these programs say they will accept five year olds, few come, and it is the older children who carry the activity program. Day care, as we have described it, begins to lose most of its children by age 8 or 9, and apparently many move into the community programs which we are now describing.

Program goals Much year-around day care in summer time has a relaxed almost home-like quality about it. There are activities, to be sure, but these children know their surroundings and spend a good deal of time inventing their own activities. In day care, for example, dramatic play was almost as common as arts and crafts. Also in day care there is always the long day, while many summer only programs are half day only and maintain a faster pace.

Skills and equipment These data also highlight the fact that much year around day care does not have access to equipment or to adults with special skills who can teach children as many new things as they might be ready for. Tools, elaborate learning games, microscopes, etc. were available especially in summer only programs which emphasized skills. Such things hold the interest of older children and are not often found in regular day care.

Some Vignettes of Summer-Only Programs

The following descriptions by observers of summer-only programs should give the reader some flavor of the range of services which are available in the community.

Summer School in the Public Schools

Classroom #1 This was a first through third grade set up as an open classroom. All sorts of games and equipment were present in abundance. The teacher acted as facilitator, moving around, answering questions, showing children where they could find equipment which would help them solve a given problem. The children selected their own equipment and kept busy and happy the entire time they were in the room.

I did not observe a single discipline problem (although in one instance the same children in the previous hour had rioted for the teacher next door.) I saw remedial math students having a ball with math, problem children behaving in an exemplary manner -- delightful!

Classroom #2 A typical elementary school program; lots of ditto sheets, assigned work, and group discussions and bells that ring.

City Recreation Departments

Throughout Los Angeles County each incorporated city has a recreation department. These vary considerably in quality and in buildings and equipment available.

1/ Dramatic play was almost non-existent (0.8%) in these programs, but accounted for 10% of the activities in the year around programs.

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Playground #1 The drop-in program at this site is about a city block square and includes a large recreation building (gym, rooms off halls, very old and not too inviting -- like a school building). It is open from 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. all summer. There are ball fields, a grassy area with trees, playground equipment for younger children. But the program is "drop-in". There are several people on the playground during the day to serve as leaders. The outside activities evidently vary a little from day to day. There is lots of ball playing. The leaders are usually college students on vacation, majoring in physical education or elementary education.

For the first six weeks of summer this playground runs what is called the recreation enrichment program from 8:00 to 12:00 each day. There are about 95 children enrolled in this program, which costs $29.00 for the session (amounting to about $1.00 a day for four hours; not bad baby sitting money). We observed some of these groups. The K-1 group was particularly depressing because the teacher was uninspired and uninspiring and was stifling to the children. There were easels using tiny paint brushes and those little tin boxes with small cakes of paint -- at easels! The older children had more leeway; there was room to mess around a little. A child enrolled in the program doesn't have to come every day, but once there he must do what is presented for the four hours. A lot depends on the teacher of each interest group. The art program was very relaxed with children doing pretty much what they wanted to do. One girl was just holding a kitten in her lap, two were banging on the piano and most of them were involved in a tie and dye activity.

The director said he would be happy to cooperate with a working mother if she talked with him. A child can come to the enrichment program, bring a sack lunch and then stay on the playground for drop-in program and thus be here all day quite safely -- probably.

Playground #2 At another center, I spoke with the leader, a young college girl, who said that no adult is scheduled to supervise her playground over lunch, but she feels the children need a place to be so she doesn't go to lunch until after 1:00 when the other leader is there and working; that leaves the facilities open. At this site the children are not economically deprived, but the leader said many of them are home with the maid or housekeeper and obviously would rather be here with other children and an assortment of things to do.

Playground #3 This is a program that is distinguished by its facility. It is in a town of 15,000 with a recreation area or park four blocks square, and the club house sits in the middle on one side. The park includes two full-sized baseball fields, many tennis courts, a horseshoe area (I bet I have the only observation of children playing horseshoes!) lawn bowling, putting green, shuffle board and a large smooth cement semi-circular area made especially for roller skating. The park is multi-leveled and there are picnic tables on terraced sections. The city plunge is a few blocks distant and is available both for the recreation department's swimming program and for swimming for everyone at other times -- all free of charge. In fact almost everything is free unless it is something that takes an unusual amount of material or a specially paid instructor.

Some parts of this program are unusual. For example, all kinds of equipment can be checked out on a card much like a library card. There is no charge for ping pong balls and paddles, balls of all kinds, games, and golf clubs for the putting greens are available.

Some of the club house program is much like other department of recreation type programs: guitar lessons, dance, chess, tennis, etc. It is the facilities that make the difference. There is a lovely large kitchen with two adjoining rooms and when I went in children had just baked brownies and Russian tea cakes. While there, I saw a puppetry class where children were still putting some finishing touches on clever hand puppets they had made. The scenery and stage were home made and presumably they had helped with that too. (The leader started the session by having everyone close their eyes and then passed out home-made cookies to each child's outstretched hand).

There were also three teen-agers working on scenery for "Sound of Music" which is an intergenerational project in which children of many ages work with adults to put on a real production. In this auditorium there is a real theatrical lighting board system and sound system. The three youngsters I saw were building canvas panels, again with real theatrical materials. The director was a drama major and professional and her know-how shows in the things going on.

In response to my question about working mothers, a staff member at this playground said she is sure that there are children who come because their mother works. She arrives at 8:30 a.m. to set up things and some children are already there, older ones with younger ones in tow and sack lunches. She really doesn't know how many use it as day care, but it obviously can easily work that way.

The staff they have for summer is mostly college students -- no trouble getting staff. The director said they do try to hire all-American, clean-cut types who would be good models, no long

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hair, etc. She mentioned that the community is conservative politically, insulated by the ocean, airport and freeway on three sides and the children don't get outside the community much until they are in cars. The center serves only one or two black families; several Spanish speaking are from South America, children of airline employees.

Playground #4 Over the phone the director of this public recreation center described plans for a day care program which grew out of the realization the previous summer that the program was much used by chidren of working mothers. The staff thought the proposed fee was modest for the services they would provide.

All this lovely idea -- and when I arrived to interview the director I found that the whole thing had folded because of not enough children. They are all going to summer school and the drop-in park programs -- all of which cost the mother nothing. Scratch this program.

Programs Offered by Youth Serving Agencies

Program #1 This center is run by a religious order whose dedication is working with young people. For the summer six or seven of the Brothers of the order come into the program. In addition NYC funds are available to hire 40 or so aides to work at various times. These NYC workers are boys in the neighborhood who have grown up through the center and so are familiar with what is going on. The center, open afternoons and evenings, is in a deteriorated commercial business area with numbers of boarded-up stores up and down the street. There is a good sized pool just outside the building and a baseball diamond on the other side (all asphalt, no grass in the entire area) and a gym. The rest of the building is rooms sparsely furnished only with essentials; no frills, no carpets; pool tables in the game room, color TV and easy chairs. The 143 boys I saw were almost all either swimming, playing in or watching sports tournaments. The hallway was lined with lists of various teams and their standings in the current tournaments -- baseball and basketball, etc.

The religious order supports this center, supplemented by money raised locally by a Board of Directors composed of local business men. If a working mother wants to see if her boy is or has been there she can call to check on his membership number. The boys check in by membership number but staff doesn't keep track of them in any other way.

Program #2 This Catholic day camp can't really be used as an alternative to day care for working mothers because it is only two weeks in duration at each location. The whole staff moves from parish to parish. As far as I could see there was no religious instruction involved. The camp I observed was located in a parish school auditorium and cafeteria. Tables were set up around the periphery of the room and each group went to its assigned table to work on a project.

While there I saw only arts and crafts although I was assured that there were sports activities also. The equipment being nil, the activities being relatively standard and boring, I still felt this wouldn't be such a bad place for a child. The staff seemed to be genuinely interested in the children. There didn't seem to be a lot of stringent rules, regulations or behavioral expectations. Anybody who wanted to come to the day camp was welcome; it was free. Midway through a hot smoggy summer in asphalt city, this place looked like a little oasis.

Program #3 A youth-serving program which is funded through some complicated filtering down of federal funds. I find it difficult to report objectively about this center. It consisted of a large dirty gym, equipped with one basketball, and several smaller empty rooms. I saw no equipment. I saw nothing being offered to the children in attendance other than the love and bitterness of one staff member. The man to whom Dorothy talked on the phone never showed for our appointment. The report he gave during the phone conversation proved erroneous on most counts. The whole place seemed to be a monument to graft.

Program #4 A Jewish Community Center reserves the space in the public park as the base for a day camp. The 200 children are divided into two main groups, ages 6 - 8 and ages 9 - 12, and the these are further divided into subgroups. It is a very mobile program with almost no day spent entirely at the park. The center rents four large buses for the summer. These pick up children at convenient corners in their neighborhood at about 8:30 a.m. and then are available all day to take the children places. So by being in one of four groups each child always knows which bus to get on and it makes moving from one place to another much simpler.

Today the group I was to visit is scheduled to go to Hebrew Union College where a program "Kids and Digs" had been set up in the museum by a young Israeli archeologist. The group I followed as they went through the museum was composed of 22 children (seven more than the group size which the museum had requested). The experience was set up to let children be archeologists for

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a day. There was an introductory few minutes to get acquainted with the language and the tools and a diagram of the buried layers of civilization and each child (except for the seven more than were planned for) got a tool. They then had a chance to dig with shovels in the sand. When they struck a piece of artifact, those with brushes came forward and gently exposed them. The child with the camera took a picture and one with a basket took them to another table where a scientist was waiting with measuring and recording instruments which she instructed the children how to use. The children then moved from one station to another to hear and do and see about pottery, weaving, weapons, coins, an ancient Israeli house; a neat way to bring archeology as a science alive.

At the center itself, which is a large multi-storied building with corridors and rooms like a large school or office building, I was at once impressed with the difference between the people, who are warm and caring, and the setting, which is rather stark. This place does make an attempt to serve the children of working mothers. At no extra charge a working mother can request her child to be taken at 4:00 to the center instead of home and then the parent can pick him up at 5:30 or 6:00 p.m. Also the week after school is out and the one before it starts, when regular day camp is not in session, an extra camp is run for these children.

Some Private Day Camps

Program #1 This program is housed in a wooded natural area reached by a steep road which winds up the hillside. About 50 children are enrolled. The program is completely free choice with children going where they want when they want. Two girl counselors stay in the art department, an area under a roof but open on two sides. All materials are out and available, not neat storage but available and inviting. There are tables around the edge of the room for safe keeping of things that take more than one day. Painting, clay and weaving are available. Drying paper mache objects attest to a recent project. Two girl counselors are working with children at the stables with the horses, one young man at the trampoline, one at the pool and one in a wooded area in a little ravine. There is no concern or pressure about being by yourself. All of this is going on in the midst of whatever else Mr. Y. is building. (The husband of the program director is an artist-builder and always actively engaged while the program is in session). Today Mr. Y. was smoking ocean fish he had caught over the week end. He has his own art works in rooms that are enclosed only by screens so that children can see them.

Program #2 This camp is by far and away the most delightful place I have seen so far, perhaps because the cost per child is so prohibitive, about $1.60 per hour, no meals provided, no before and after hours care for children of working mothers. It is a beautiful place, grounds full of dirt and trees and elegant climbing equipment, goats, dogs, rabbits, rats, ducks, and a relaxed and incredibly supportive environment.

The children above pre-kindergarten age are separated by sex as well as by age group. Boys have male staff, girls have female. I noticed a good deal of mingling while I was there. The director said that sex grouping was started 19 years ago when the camp began operation and that they were now seriously considering doing away with it.

Program #3 This day camp starts off in Franklin Park. On the morning I was there only two groups remained within observation distance after the morning assembly. Two others were off-site for an all day swim; another two were at regular swimming lessons held in a private pool; one group was deciding what to do because their plans for the day didn't materialize; another had gone hiking. Judging from the facilities available to the two groups which were still on site, I would say that those who had split were more fortunate. The two available activities were crafts and folk dancing, both held in an old baronial cafeteria building with virtually no equipment. The children in crafts were getting a lecture on how to make clay jewelry, and the children folk dancing were reluctantly, to put it mildly, doing a Mexican hat dance to the sound of an old monaural record.

The camp is dedicated to the ideal of integration and seems to have achieved its goal. There was a nice no-hassle atmosphere. I didn't see any adult get impatient with a child and was impressed with the built-in flexibility. The program is fairly expensive and probably does not get much use by working mothers.

Program #4 This program is housed on a quiet side street where the tall shady trees and large old houses give a look of ragged gentility. The director of the program is a single woman with a large family to support. During the school year she does accounting work, simply because it is more lucrative than teaching. For the past three summers, however, she has been taking children into her own home (up to 10 because that is the most she wants and the most that her VW bus will hold). At best the summer pays for itself, gives her children playmates, and gives her a chance to do what she likes best. This is a home-like setting and serves working parents. The director

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points out that children spend the majority of their days away from home, and children need home. The family aspect has some observable ingredients. There is the director with her strength and warmth and sensitivity, there is the house and grounds, there is baking birthday cakes from scratch and taking a day-long trip to Catalina and fixing bikes so you can ride them and break them and fix them again and hide out in glens behind bushes and little-girl ostracism and playing cards and curling up with a comic book in a shady corner not too far away from everyone.

While I was talking there was a little girl digging, sitting alone in the dry dirt on the side of the driveway with the bushes at her back in the heat of the sun and digging. She dug and poked and scraped for a good three quarters of an hour. Then she got up with a hand sized piece of soft rock in one hand, a piece of concrete in the other and standing in the driveway she began scraping the rock with the concrete, sometimes chopping fiercely, sometimes scratching delicately. She brought it over and showed it to M. The rock revealed a delicately etched sombrero. M. explained that they had been to a museum a few days before, and the girl had been impressed with some ancient wall sculptures.

Program #5 The YWCA offers day care for children 7 to 12 years from 7:30 a.m. in the morning until 5:30 in the afternoon. The regular day camp program is run from 9:00 to 3:00 as a part of the day. When the day care children arrive in the morning, before the regular program begins, they can read, go to the craft room in the gym or talk with friends. At 9:00 a.m. the entire group reports to the gym where roll is taken and each girl's money is collected. (Apparently the girls are allowed to purchase snacks from vending machines, but their money is held for them by the staff during the day). After roll call the girls are divided into three groups according to age. They stay within their own groups all day long and move from activity to activity.

The YW did not seem particularly well-equipped to provide stimulating experiences for children who must stay from 7:30 to 5:30. The craft room was furnished with a lot of "junk" to mess about with but I didn't see many really exciting materials. In the gym there was no equipment at all. The drama room had a rug in the middle. In the dance area there was only an old chair and record player. Outside was a volley ball net and enough badminton equipment for four players. In answer to my question about problems the director replied, *We don't reach enough children in the community. There must be many other families who could use this service.*

Program #6 This Boys Club was an impressively well-equipped facility. In one room there were 64 children involved in activities at six full-sized pool tables, two ping pong tables, a TV corner, long tables for sitting at to talk or play checkers or Monopoly, tables of carom type games, a fireplace, lots of chairs and couches for just sitting and resting. There is an adult/boy ratio of one to fifteen. But it seems to work by having almost one-to-one or very small groups in the area where an adult is needed, while the large group in the game room functioned with one adult.

In the craft area there is one nicely equipped room and five other rooms which are used only when an instructor is there: a room with 18 kinds of power tools, a finishing room where a product can be taken for fine touch-up, a lapidary room with six to eight power machines for polishing and cutting, a beautifully equipped photography lab and a ceramics room including a kiln. My impression is that this is a really neat program for boys. My sadness is that it is in a part of town which is most inaccessible to boys who most need it. When I asked the director about working mothers, he says he does cooperate. If a mother wants to call, they will page a child so she can talk to him. The club does not keep track of the boys and is open only from 12 noon to 6:00 p.m.

Program #7 At this Girls Club the director believes in letting young people plan and run the program themselves as much as possible. There is a relaxed pleasant atmosphere. The only scheduled things are those which have an instructor, like swimming. Because there is no pool here the girls use the one at the Boys Club next door. The Girls Club (in contrast to the Boys Club) has only two paid professionals, but by using girls themselves as resources they have got a lot of good things happening. At the time I visited there must have been about one hundred girls of various ages, making the adult/child ratio about 50 to 1.

Behind the building is an ecology center which is built up over soil-covered garbage fill. This has a shelter, all kinds of indigenous plants being grown in a natural setting, a little pond with fish and frogs to be caught. A little girl about 9 years old was my guide through the facility. The whole area is fenced in by a tall wire chain-linked fence for obvious safety reasons since there is a large pool there. An older girl mans the center and when children come to the ecology area she teaches them about plants and nature in a relaxed non-classroom way.

The director knows that the Girls Club is used as day care; she seems, therefore, to have the attitude that as long as it is being used as such it should be good and should be open the kinds of hours that makes it possible for a mother to use it -- all day from 8:00 to 6:00 p.m. (unlike the Boys Club). She is also aware that the location of this building on the east side of town is not

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where the children who need it most live. There is a mobile girls unit which goes to different locations all summer. The director maintains contact with the police juvenile unit to let her know when and where they see a hot spot developing, and then she scoots the mobile unit over there for a day or two.

Children who work in the program can get credits which will help them get a paid job in recreation elsewhere. There is a mixture of all ages and colors here. A Mexican-American girl about fifteen was heading a cooking session on the outside patio, using a large electric skillet, and all the other children were chopping vegetables and grating cheese. In the sewing room a couple of older girls and younger ones were sewing real clothes on real machines with the older girls showing the younger ones how.

Summary

As can be seen there are a variety of summer only programs in the community. Some like private day camp #4, Jewish Community Center and YWCA provide a day care service. A few like the Girls Club program meet day care needs and could provide a complete day care service if more staff were provided. Others like the Boys Club, other day camps and recreation programs have facilities but do not meet these needs except on a casual basis.

In an earlier chapter we discussed the large number of agencies existing in the community which provide services to school age children. The youth service agencies, recreation departments and community centers described here all have a building where a variety of activities for young people are offered during the year. However, most of them emphasize recreation and/or skills. They could, conceivably, offer day care year round, but have not chosen to do so.

It may be that those agencies which serve older children would find it difficult to combine day care, and its keeping track of a child's whereabouts, with the independent comings and goings of large numbers of other children. As children grow older they do not want to check in and out. The other alternative for keeping track is a close personal tie and not many of these programs are designed to establish this type of relationship.

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PART II: A LOOK AT REAL CENTERS

Introduction

Some readers may be surprised to find that so many pages of this report are devoted to case histories. We used this approach because so little is known about day care for school age children that it seemed as if some good descriptive material might facilitate everyone's thinking. Sometimes a series of solutions helps to clarify the nature of the problem to be solved.

The selection of the centers to be described in the case histories was limited, for the most part, to those centers which sought to provide a program of considerable complexity. We did not choose facilities which tacked on an after school playground experience and called it day care, nor did we include centers which permitted a few school age children to return to the day care center where they had spent their preschool years. Both of these options may be very good solutions for some children and for certain times. We would not want to see these options forbidden or eliminated, but they do not provide for the wide spectrum of needs to which good school age day care must address itself.

The case histories of those centers which we have chosen to include are presented according to sponsorship. In our experience sponsorship is not predictive of quality or its absence in any given center, however, it does predict many of the constraints to which a program must adapt. It also determines the relationships between funding source and the people directly responsible for the program. And the realities of funding always determine what services can or cannot survive.

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CHAPTER VI

THIRTY YEARS OF PUBLIC SPONSORSHIP: THE CHILDREN'S CENTERS PROGRAM

Since 1943, when wartime emergencies and the Lanham Act created Child Care Centers (now Children's Centers) with combined funding from the State Department of Education, local school districts, and parent fees, California has had a unique public program of child care. The original program was one primarily of care and protection for children of mothers working in defense industries. Over the years it has evolved into a component of the total education system. Since the Children's Centers have a sliding fee scale based on income, they have been a major source of child care for single parents, many of whom could not afford more expensive proprietary arrangements. For those who can establish eligibility the Centers have been a real haven, meeting the needs of single parents by providing a safe environment in which their children could grow and develop.

In an earlier study *AN INSTITUTIONAL ANALYSIS OF DAY CARE PROGRAM* (Prescott et al, 1972b), we had an opportunity to observe first hand the fruits of twenty-five years of hard labor in building a preschool program. We found considerable variation in quality of program and setting, conditioned by a number of variables including size, staff, leadership characteristics of directors and the networks of contacts developed by them, school district supports, etc. In the present study we returned to look at the school age program in Children's Centers. We wondered -- among other things -- what effect physical 1/ and administrative relationships with the public schools would have on the kind of care provided. We discovered, as in our previous study, that the kinds of families served by the center, the space provided to the center, the autonomy or lack of it, the support given directors in providing stimulating and yet secure programs, were critical factors in program quality.

We have chosen several examples of center programs to illustrate some unique as well as typical features of care for older children under Board of Education auspices. One facility is the result of thirty years of dedication by the center director, working constantly to build up a network of support and resources in a school district and community which historically has enjoyed a fairly comfortable socio-economic status but is now experiencing changing social mores and poverty. The second is located in an area in which the median income is low, the proportion of Spanish-speaking families is high, the social and economic problems more pressing, the moneys available to school age program more limited, and the time span for build-up of services has been much more abbreviated. In addition, we have drawn on other centers for illustrations of the ways in which such programs cope successfully or unsuccessfully with the particular circumstances in which they find themselves.

Beach City Children's Center 2/: The Cadillac of the Public Programs

The Children's Centers in Beach City are characterized by a high quality of services which have always had an educational component, long before it was mandated by the State Legislature. In addition, the effect of the environment on teacher and child behavior has always been uppermost in the director's mind.

Physical Environment

Surf Blvd. Center is Beach City's newest facility, built adjacent to an elementary school. Mrs. C., the director, tells us the Center was designed and built to meet the needs of school age care. Its families represent a mixed bag of ethnic groups and nationalities. Fifty percent are welfare recipients, nearly all are young, single parents, and all are working, going to school, or ill.

The building is unusual in shape and design, a sort of demi-octagon which has interesting angles and nooks and crannies much like a Victorian house. The total effect is anything but Victorian, however. Mod as well as modular, the units are fitted together to make a total environment which functions as an open classroom. Space and activities flow freely indoors and out, from the entry hall in which informal business is transacted (the director uses her small, more insulated private office for conferences and her never-ending book keeping task) and the kitchen

1/ Primarily because of the availability of school facilities during World War II, as well as the funding, in many cases, by school districts through special tax overrides, the Children's Centers are typically located on or adjacent to public elementary or, in some cases, junior high schools.

2/ The names of centers have been changed along with other identifying characteristics.

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behind it, into the activity room. The kindergarten 3/ is on the right, the first- through-sixth grade room on the left. Each area opens into the enclosed patio, a giant mass of insulated units and private spaces, cushioned with velvet covers, old blankets and pillows, interspersed with ping-pong and pool tables and craft activities and what seem at first glance to be a million different interest centers. Beyond this area is a large and well-equipped outdoor area with sand, grass, gardens and a variety of play equipment.

Staffing

The staffing patterns and characteristics reflect the care which has gone into this aspect of programming. With an enrollment of seventy-three children, there is a staff/child ratio of approximately 1:10, and each group has its own teacher. In addition there are two aides on a work-study program, a cook, custodian, and social workers attached to the center. During the winter, teachers and the cook work split-shifts. The regular staff is augmented by over a dozen students who come in from the local junior college to gain experience working with children, and there are two volunteers to help with various odd jobs. They impressed us with their warmth, enthusiasm, and willingness to go along with the children to help them develop their own play themes.

Another hallmark of the Beach City Centers is the emphasis placed on having men, particularly in a non-authoritarian father-figure role, in the centers. Male custodians are encouraged to involve the children in their work; the children eagerly ask questions, hold wrenches, volunteer a solution to problems and have an opportunity to see a man in a work situation. Male aides are sought and three of the teachers are men.

An observer witnessed a typical and heart-warming incident in which a young girl from a fatherless home had attached herself eagerly to a grey-haired male aide and wouldn't let him go. She bounced the ball to him on the playground for the longest time, and as they finally walked indoors she chatted happily with him as he answered her questions about the stone in his ring: *It's a garnet -- that is a cheap ruby!*

The teachers range in age from 22 to 66. The director feels that a balance in age is important: *The younger ones are bright, creative, innovative, always bringing in new ways of doing things; but the older ones hold up better -- they take less time off.*

The educational level of staff is high. Two of the teachers have California elementary teaching credentials, which is not a requirement for Children's Centers. Credentialled teachers in the Beach City Centers receive pay equal to that of teachers in the school system; this has been the Centers Director's long term goal set many years ago -- good pay and good quality, she reasoned, go hand in hand.

The director commented in our interview with her that one of the greatest rewards of her job was to see the growth not only of the children but of the teachers. In this center much care is taken to see that the staff have the freedom to grow and develop along with the children:

> *We've placed our goals high -- we've worked hard on spelling them out clearly, developing curriculum guidelines. We hope to initiate a teacher training program in which they will visit other schools. Another goal we have yet to accomplish, but expect to, is to have individual conferences with teachers once a month.*

Parents

Parent growth is also nurtured at Surf Blvd. The recognition of the needs of parents is everywhere apparent in the Children's Centers, and is particularly strong in this center. When asked what things about the school age program she felt is most important for others to know, the director commented:

> *Everyone should realize what kind of a role one-parent families must play. There is a great need for sensitivity on the teacher's part for the understanding of parents' and children's needs. The children need a greater one-to-one relationship; the parents need lots of understanding and help with finances. They're so poor, and they're tired; they have no time to give outside of work. We want the parents to contribute in some way, though, to become involved for their and the children's sake. It's so hard for our parents. We want to help them learn about parenting. Many are young and they don't know how. We're anxious that their parent organization function. . .*

3/ An unusual facet of the program is the location of the school kindergarten program within the Children's Center, thus providing an even stronger link between the two programs.

A great deal of staff energy at Surf Blvd. is directed towards getting parents involved in the program, frequently through pot-luck dinners where films of their children are shown. It is from the Parent's Association, one of the most effective in the state, that the pressure to prevent the closing of the centers has been generated numerous times over the years. In addition, it provides an opportunity for parents to have their own needs met, whether it be a chance to discuss their problems or an opportunity to develop their own potential as individuals.

Relationship to Public School

One of the unique features of Surf Blvd. is the multiplicity of programs housed under one roof. Besides the extended day care there are the public school kindergarten classes conducted in the building, a Title I Intra-Cultural Center (nearly one-third of Surf Blvd.'s families are black; roughly one-seventh are Mexican-American, with some Oriental and a number of Jewish families). The director is constantly alert to ways in which participants can intermingle and programs can enrich each other.

Contact between center and elementary school teachers is close and occurs daily. We became aware, not only at Surf Blvd., but at other centers, of the importance of the extended day program in acting as advocate, a sort of ombudsman, for the child and parent. The center staff is less pressured than the elementary teachers by academic requirements and time schedules and is in closer contact with parents, who are asked to bring children into the center in the morning and who frequently stop to talk to staff about problems when they pick children up at night.

The director points out:

> *We have many up-tight, angry parents who feel the school teachers are unfair. We're go-betweens and can explain things to the parents, as well as to the teachers, who also have their problems with apathetic or hostile, violent children and don't understand their behavior. We can explain why the child is what he is, the problems in the home because we know more about their backgrounds -- the teacher is often concerned only about academics . . .*

Daily contact between school and center occurs by telephone, by writing notes, through informal visits -- between teachers, the school nurse, and occasionally the principal. The center is initiating a once-a-month rap session involving school personnel. Twice a year parent-center teacher conferences are held as well as more frequent contact through the Parent's Association in which staff is also involved in a non-authority role.

Program

The program works for the total welfare of the whole child -- not in the academic sense with which the school is primarily concerned, but with the social, emotional and physical aspects of his development, as well as the intellectual. Geared to the children's interests and structured only minimally by the elementary school schedule; it is designed to provide a place where a child can relax. Activities are limited only by the teachers' and children's ingenuity in creating them. In the morning the teacher discusses with the children the activities she has planned and alters them to suit their interests and suggestions.

In the winter the children paint, sew, play cards or other games, use the carom board or shoot pool (a standard size pool table is located on the patio), build with blocks or read (books are everywhere, attractively and invitingly displayed on horizontal and vertical shelves). Outdoors, they skate or ride bicycles or evolve their own games in the mammoth yard, which contains a great deal of large muscle equipment, or sharpen their skills in games which are fun and at the same time teach such things as co-ordination; there are circles painted on the asphalt with L and R (for left and right) in a pattern which invites imaginations to invent games. A clown painted on the cement forms a hop-scotch court. There are also furry animals to play with; children can often be seen lying on the grass playing with rabbits. In the summer, water play is added to the activities; a giant sand pit makes a fine place to fill with water and dig in. Making mud meatballs is an added attraction.

The center frequently uses nearby parks, to which the children can walk all year round. With written permission from parents, children can leave the center to take part in after-school activities elsewhere -- Scouting, Little League, and recreation projects in the city park two and a half blocks away. In the summer these resources are augmented by a swimming program sponsored by the city, visits to the beach four blocks away, and trips around the community in buses provided by the school district (three full-day trips are allotted). Surf Blvd. is in a better position to provide these enriching experiences than many centers, because of the many years the center's director has spent in building up community contacts and the geographical proximity to varied community resources.

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The top age for children presently enrolled in the program is eleven, but there are relatively few children above the third grade level. One of the main problems in school age program is boredom, which tends to set in after years of attendance, day in and day out, often from age three. Summer with its long hours is especially difficult. We asked if they had used weekly or monthly themes in the summer, as some centers do, to which the director replied: *No, we tried in the past and found we needed more variety; the children get bored.*

A problem of another sort -- acclimating new children -- is eased by the fact that nearly all children come directly from the district's preschool centers. They are moved into the kindergarten group during the summer before school starts, thus helping them to make one new adjustment at a time, rather than two. Having kindergarten classes in the center further helps to alleviate this difficulty.

Who Gets In

It is clear that a program such as that provided by Surf Blvd. offers not only children, but parents as well, services which are unusually high in quality; the misfortune is that they are limited to so few. As at most centers, the waiting list is long (just before summer it typically lengthens). In the spring it contained approximately eighty names.

Few new school age applicants ever get into Surf Blvd., since the two preschool centers in the Beach City district provide nearly all of the new children they can take. The second barrier to admittance is the stringent eligibility requirements governing admittance to Children's Center programs throughout the state. Except for two-parent families below poverty level, only those families in which the sole parent is working, going to school, or mentally or physically ill, are eligible. A means test sets an upper cut-off with respect to allowable income.

The intake process itself is thorough and efficient. In the rare event there is an opening, the center informs the parent, who comes in for a series of three interviews with the nurse, the head teacher, and the social worker, who screens the applicant according to eligibility. The latter is required to fill out financial status forms indicating the number of children in the family, employment, and gross and net income, including AFDC (Aid for Dependent Children) grants received. According to detailed schedule, the hourly fee is calculated on the basis of the number of children in the family and the net income. In June, 1973, for example, a mother of two who earned $260.00 a month paid $.13 an hour per child. The parent is required to sign an agreement authorizing the school district to contact the employer and requisition income tax forms if necessary to verify income and employment.

A factor which is currently causing much anguish and controversy is the requirement that a child be dropped from the program at the point at which the parent's income advances beyond the specified limit. This penalizes not only the mother, who has attempted to work her way off the welfare rolls, but the child, who is often desperately in need of good care. The income limit not only prevents many families from receiving care, but restricts the center to a low-income population, thus preventing the socio-economic diversity many critics deem valuable in such a program. This problem pervades the entire California Children's Centers system, not merely Surf Blvd., and has become even more critical with recent funding cutbacks.

Care at Surf Blvd. is costly. The average cost per child in 1973 was calculated at roughly $1.05 per child hour; it has since risen due to the inflated economy. A good part of this expenditure is accounted for by the fact that the district seeks to employ credentialled teachers or those in the process of becoming credentialled and pays according to school salary scale. There are some directors in less affluent districts who feel that it is more desirable to create their own on-the-job training programs for young, talented people who need the money but need not be paid such high salaries. Our second case study will look at just such a program.

There are two features, however, which make Surf Blvd. outstanding and which could be translated into less ambitious programs. The most obvious is the utilization of space. Although it has the luxury of more space than many centers possess, the environmental plan could be used in nearly any situation. Couches, pillows, rugs, mattresses, and rockers are used frequently throughout the areas to provide softness. The space has lots of nooks and crannies which permit privacy and insulation so that activities can be developed and carried through to completion. Both indoors and outdoors there is a great variety of materials from which to choose; for example, outdoors offers asphalt for bike riding, dirt for digging, trees for climbing, many types of stationary and mobile large-muscle equipment, and a garden. Children are allowed to move freely from activity to activity, and to use the services of the teacher as facilitator in their play.

Staff, in turn, looks always for ways in which to gently nudge that play towards learning experiences and problem-solving behavior, as well as to give warmth and ego-support to children

and parents. Typical of the teachers at Surf Blvd. was the young woman who walked around the yard slowly accompanied by a boy, on his bike, who had thought up an idea for a bicycle and roller skating route to be mapped out on the play ground. She nodded frequently as he proffered his embryonic thoughts, picking up on his ideas, and expanding them. *I really like that idea!* she would comment over and over. *We could make a blue-print! that's really great.* The boy beamed and the program goals on the printed page suddenly were infused with life.

Valley View Children's Center -- A Happening:

Do You Want to Visit? No, I Want to Join! 4/

From Beach City, the eastward flight of a crow brings us to the Children's Center in Valley View. The little down-at-their-heels houses and trailers across the narrow street from the center, the light industries surrounding the elementary school next to the center, the grafitti written in Spanish with spray paint cans on the school walls, testify to the socio-economic levels of the community. But the building itself is new; the brilliant orange tropical flowers at the door defy the growth-inhibiting smog which constantly plagues the Los Angeles area. The director, at first glance, is similar to many in the Children's Centers -- she is in her middle years, conservative in appearance, and has had experience in both teaching and administration along with a degree in early childhood education. One of the first clues to the unique quality of this center comes with the sign on her desk: not *Mrs. P.* but *Marnie.* (We learn that everyone in the center is called by her or his first name -- the director, teachers, parents, as well as children). As she speaks in her soft, warm, slightly Southern drawl, and as we observe later in watching the children, we realize that she has some clear goals which she has learned how to meet in spite of the fact that the district is not wealthy, and she has been with the center only since it opened in 1969. She tells us:

> *Learning is important when it is accomplished through games. 'Teaching' comes second to loving children, giving them a strong sense of self, a value system, a respect for others -- things children from one-parent low socio-economic circumstances often miss. We try to meet and accept the child where he is -- we give him tender, loving care, lots of time for conversation. We try to help the children find their way, instead of telling them ours.*

When proposed changes in Health, Education and Welfare funding produced a crisis for Children's Centers, she went to work in her office for twenty hours a day, compiled statistics and came up with $90,000 in federal funds:

> *The day the news of the funding cut-off hit we were having a curriculum demonstration -- the cook was feeding the mothers and children, and everyone was watching the film we made of four year olds. We had some sample letters in Spanish and English and everybody took some time to write letters to the legislature. They received more mail about the Children's Center closing than was ever received about the Vietnam War* 5/.

This building houses one hundred and thirty-six children in both preschool and school age programs. Sixty are of school age. The large number of Spanish surnames reflects the 63% figure for the surrounding community.

There are many siblings; it is not unusual to have three children from one family attend the center. Most parents are factory workers and all but seven of the families are one-parent. Only 17 of the 88 families are not on state aid; there are no full-cost families.

Involving Parents

Parents at the center seem to get the same tender, loving care as the children. Because it is hard for a parent to get off work, the three separate interviews required by the state are conducted in one 1½ hour session. This means staff coordination so that all are available at one time and place. If the need is great the center's own doctor will give physical examinations and injections as well as occasional dental referrals. A social service aide keeps track of health charts, keeping them up to date. This aide, employed by the center eight hours a day, is a

4/ A child's comment, quoted from the center's scrapbook.

5/ Marnie belongs to California Children's Center Director's Association, which is an invaluable resource network of professional leadership. The group has had many year of practice in meeting crises and has succeeded in honing its weapons for saving the Children's Centers to a fine edge: *We have a hot-line to every part of the state and can be in contact with one another in five minutes!*

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liaison with the community, assisting the nurse and social worker with health checks, visiting the homes, helping to interview and screen families, listening to their problems, and providing information about community resources. Aides are required to be bilingual, to be able to drive, to be able to -- and be willing to -- learn, to listen to and communicate with parents, children, staff.

The official procedures of a public center are complicated, enveloped in a web of governmental regulations which grows stickier and more confusing every year. But Marnie has added her own personal touches; for example, a trip permission slip begins:

Dear Parents,

We are making every effort to create a relaxed home-like environment in our school. We are not trying to take your place. We're trying to help your child to adjust to a new situation. We watch for the lonely one, or the one who is suddenly missing you!

Many times one of us will be on the way to the market -- to shop for supplies, toys, or other items. We would like for the children to go with us, sometimes, when they ask 'May I go?' . . , 6/

Awareness of parents' needs and feelings permeates the climate at Valley View. We asked Marnie what questions parents ask when they enroll their child: *The mothers don't ask questions, they cry, from guilt. If they're wearing dark glasses, I always know they're going to cry.*

This is an open center and parents are encouraged to come and go freely. Indeed, it is hard to distinguish between the actors without a program -- director, teachers, aides, mothers, all look and behave very much alike. All parents are urged to bring children into the rooms in the morning and to stop and chat if they want when they pick them up at night.

As at Surf Blvd., there is an active parent program at the center which serves at least two functions: it meets social as well as other needs of parents, and it literally keeps the center going. A parent advisory council does all its own planning. It had a spring fair and dinner with a turnout of over 300. The children sold things they had made during the year and made enough money to pay for special treats and for trip money for children whose parents did not have it. A great many films are taken of the children throughout the year and shown at parent meetings -- a practice Surf Blvd., as well, has found invaluable for stimulating the parents' interest and keeping them informed about their children and what the center is all about.

Parent education goes on continuously, in subtle ways. Once a mother complained that her child was not in the office, cleaned up and ready to go at night; she said she worked hard all day and didn't want to go into the room to retrieve him. First, Marnie made it very clear that the program was for parents and if that's what the mother wanted she, Marnie, would see that the child was always in the office waiting for her. But Marnie also asked the mother to think about what it meant to her child to come in from an activity without having a chance to show his mother what he was doing.

I told her even if it means walking across the field to get him from a baseball game, it's important that she get a feel for this part of his life. That mother never, again asked me to have the child ready. You really have to let a parent know what you value about a child's life.

On Living Within a Budget

Like all good directors, Marnie knows what she wants her program to provide and has learned how to go about getting what she needs to provide it. She scrounges for materials, makes do in some areas to save money for other more important ones, such as really good art supplies and equipment for the children. Instead of buying shelving for the new building, she scrounged it with the help of parents. She shops at chain discount stores for bargains, then submits the bills to the district accountant and stifles his protests by pointing out the money she has saved the center. Instead of paying $5.00 a sheet for cots, she buys the yardage and has women in retirement homes sew them, a total cost of $.60 apiece. In turn, the children go to the homes every year and put on programs for the elderly residents as a thank you. Result: Satisfaction of a whole assortment of human needs, tangible and otherwise.

6/ Also included is a permission slip for water play during the summer months.

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Like most of the directors of really good child care programs, preschool or school age, Marnie does a great deal of gentle and gracious arm-twisting in the name of Children. She tells her staff, *I want you to learn to ask for the kids' sake. Just smile and explain why you need it.* One hesitant staff member, shaking in her shoes, went to a local merchant to ask for a new portable sewing machine. She got it for a pittance, and now boys and girls sew merrily away on aprons, pillows and shifts for parent gifts and money-making projects.

Putting It Together

In many professional circles which deal with child care programs, a conflict seems to exist between the warm, loving home-away-from-home philosophy and the educational-enrichment philosophy. The director resolves this conflict by 1) being clear about the kinds of real-life experiences she wants for children, 2) choosing staff who can implement these ideas, and 3) designing a physical environment to make these things happen. She clearly wants children to have experiences which will prepare them to be adults -- experiences which their own homes sometimes cannot provide, hard as parents may try (and most of the center's parents try very hard, Marnie notes: *all they need is a little help).* This means a great deal of problem-solving, learning how to do things, being able to try all sorts of things and being comfortable if they don't work out. She is really concerned with values, not academic skills per se, although she feels that *her* children come out ahead, in the long run, on these too. Learning through games where children are free to pick and choose from a variety of materials, with teachers acting in the role of friends and facilitators, is the plan at Valley View.

She is also concerned about building a sense of values:

> *When we first opened the center we couldn't see any sense of values in these poor kids. They had no private places to keep thing, no sense of the inviolability of others' favorite things. It's taken us four years to build up this set of values, a sense of basic trust. Teachers now leave their purses on shelves in cupboards to which children have free access. They're very good; they don't disturb them.*

A living testimonial, we thought, to the center's progress in teaching values.

One way this is accomplished is by choosing staff who respect the children's as well as adult's rights; another is by keeping the communication lines open. In the hall is a suggestion box in which children as well as staff and parents may put notes. Often Marnie writes notes back: *The children have fun learning to unscramble my messages!*

Staffing

Staff for the Valley View Center is carefully chosen, not on the basis of credentialling *(I don't want a trained person who hasn't had a new idea since 1930)* or sex:

> *The school district thought I was really far out when I approached them about getting men in the program. Few of these children have fathers at home and they need contact with men, especially the boys; I don't want a bunch of sissies leaving here and going out into the world.*

but on creativity, enthusiasm, and feeling for working with children. There is a male teacher in charge of the upper two year olds, as well as men in all parts of the school age program.

Against the posting of rules, Marnie wants teachers who can help children to learn values in a situational rather than an absolute way: *You take the situation as it comes up and you establish what is important and you help the children understand how to make decisions.*

She wants her teachers to take care of each child and love him a lot: *If a teacher does that, they're not going to need a list of rules and I'm not going to have to worry if the school is educational!* Are children ever told to go to an activity? She bristles:

> *Over my dead body! The last thing these children need is to be pushed. They're starved for art and music and delightful things. We had lots of wood scraps and blocks for the Head Start children when we opened and we soon discovered it was the sixth graders who used them most; they had never had the opportunity for this sort of thing and never got it out of their systems.*

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Helping with homework is a thing staff do if asked, but this is not their idea of an important thing in an after school program. Marnie is more concerned that the children try out their interest in science, photography, books and sewing: *This is a time when children should be able to choose and get involved on their own.* The kind of teacher who can help a child do this, she feels, is not necessarily one who has put in many hours in classes getting a credential; she would much prefer doing her own on-the-job training.

Clearly, the staff works well together, does a lot of planning and spending their own time doing it, and has a great deal of fun in the bargain. They frequently take children on week-end trips (not as official center employees but as *friends of the family*), or get together with other staff members on Saturdays going to art exhibits, fairs, craft displays, to get ideas 7/. Staff has complete freedom to try out new ideas and Marnie wants them to know that it is all right for them to fail. Instead of formal lesson plans Marnie has a book for each staff member to write down what he is going to do for the day and then at the end, add comments about how it worked.

The Physical Environment

Marnie spent an entire year, with the blessings of district personnel, doing research and designing the center: a modern building with climate control -- heating and air conditioning -- and carpeting. *(It was terrible before they put it in; we were always sweeping up and it was so dusty,* one teacher confided.) There are rooms for the preschool program, an office with glass walls so that it is not isolated, kitchen, places for parents to meet. A folding wooden door which separated areas when Head Start was housed in the building can be used to divide the school age room, which has boys' and girls' bathrooms and a kitchenette at one end. At the other end along one wall is a slightly raised platform, dominated by a large and very comfortable-looking couch 8/. Several over-stuffed chairs are in evidence, as well as a working sink in the house-play corner, and seemingly acres of storage cabinets, all available to the children excepting a few shelves reserved for especially hard-to-get art supplies.

The yard of the center itself is rather small and narrow, but there is free access to the huge elementary school playground immediately adjacent, which is mostly grass (seldom found in school yards), where there is room for about three baseball games to be played simultaneously, two hard-surface basketball courts and the standard tether-ball, rings and swings. Often boys from the center go off with organized baseball teams on the school playground. Swings, dirt, trees, and grass are all available; but Marnie, her eye on a brighter star, hopes for even better things. For two years she has been discussing with the school district the possibility of moving the Children's Center to a school which has been closed because of the population drop. A small, beautiful setting in a country area, it has animals next door and trees, and is situated next to a lake to which the children could walk. Marnie hopes to add a sick-bay for ill children and care for infants and toddlers up to two years of age, as well as providing 24-hour care. This, she feels, would also cut down on vandalism since the custodian as well as other staff would be on duty around the clock.

Relation to the Public School

Because the center is an equal partner within this school system, relations with the neighboring elementary school personnel are close, particularly with the kindergarten teachers. There is mutual appreciation of one another and, in fact, the school may be the greater beneficiary:

> *We help them out; we loan our aides to the school when they need extra staff. We baked a cake to welcome back the teachers. They appreciate our efforts with the children. If a a child needs special help, the (school) teachers and mothers can conference in our building over a cup of coffee. We're helping the teachers too because we're setting the scene for learning.*

Indeed, the motto of Valley View could be *We try a little harder.* Many centers do not open until 7:00 a.m.; Valley View opens at 6:30. Many close at 6:00 p.m.; Valley View is open until 7:00. The center serves a hot breakfast from its own kitchen, plus three other meals (the traditional snack is a substantial meal here, a nutritious breakfast of cereal, milk, and fresh

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7/ *This is all strictly volunteer,* notes our interviewer, *and can only happen when staff members feel they run the show and really enjoy doing it.*

8/ It was well-used by the children. One afternoon it was supporting the seemingly lifeless body of an older boy. *That,* explained a teacher in response to our questioning glance, *is a boy who goes to football practice every day and he gets so exhausted, he really needs a nap!*

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sliced bananas at 3:00 p.m.), plus a meal at supper-time for "mommas who pick up late". Somehow, they can always bend the rules a bit for ill children who need care or family emergencies. For older children in junior high school who need supervision and something constructive to do but cannot technically be included in the program, there are jobs as aides. Teachers frequently take children on weekend and summer outings 9/. When a child displays behavior which is causing concern, a conference with the parent is held to determine if something has happened at home to upset him. If it seems to relate to a physical problem, there is a consultation with the nurse, and referrals for health services if needed. More serious problems call for a three-way conference between nurse, teacher and parent to map out a re-training program for the child. The director is always available to teachers to help them with problems they find difficult to handle.

The result of all this is, understandably, a program which neither parents nor children want to leave. This is one of the few programs where many children stay until 6th grade. Marnie instituted her Junior High Aide plan to avoid kicking them out. As at Surf Blvd., turnover is low and the waiting list is long. There were close to 100 names on it when we observed there in 1973. This means several things, both good and bad: 1) a continuity and stability in activities and social groups which help children develop a sense of camaraderie and community, 2) a need for staff to be constantly aware of possibilities for providing variety and new ideas, and 3) limiting of enrollment and thus accessibility of services to parents.

The Daily Program

How does such a program look to the observer? On paper, it appears to be ordinary enough; the schedule is posted on the wall:

A.M.	7:00	8:30	Breakfast 10/
	7:30	8:15	Inside activities: arts, crafts, games, music, homework 11/
	8:15	8:30	Clean-up, roll-call (both usually done by the children)
	8:30	9:00	Free play
	9:00	10:00	Classes with primary students: math, spelling, reading, arts and crafts, music, games 12/
P.M.	2.10	3:10	Classes with primary students: math, spelling, reading, arts and crafts, music, games 12/
	3:10	3:30	Nutrition
	3:30	5:00	Selected activities: arts, crafts, cooking 13/, physical education, music, sewing, industrial arts, gymnastics, nature study
	5:00	5:30	Inside activities; reading, story-telling, music, games, homework.

The stated goals, too, are pretty standard for Children's Centers. Stated in abridged form here, they are:

1) To promote and protect the child's physical health and well being.
2) To encourage development of language and conceptual skills through a variety of experience that will satisfy and stimulate the child's curiosity about the world around him 14/.
3) To provide a wide range of creative experiences.
4) To extend and supplement learning experiences of the home, classroom and community.
5) To promote emotional stability.
6) To provide social experiences which will stimulate a sense of personal responsibility and an awareness of the rights of others.

9/ Summer is an especially delightful time, with matinees once a week in the shopping center which offers special movies for children, trips to places like Marineland, and swimming lessons as well as trips to the park.

10/ At 6:00 a.m. one teacher arrives to greet the early-birds; at 7:00 a.m. the other teacher and aides arrive to set up activity centers; all eat with the children.

11/ No child is assigned to an activity; helping children learn how to make choices, *to use their heads*, is one goal of the program. As for schedules, *we change too fast to stick to any straight road.*

12/ Staggered sessions at the school mean some children are in the center at this hour.

13/ One month they had cooking every day because the teacher was interested in it, thought she'd try it with the kids, and *it just kept going.*

14/ An elaboration of this goal specified that the program: Provide an enrichment program; enable the child to select an activity of choice; help the child be receptive to a teacher; provide tutoring; allow time to share ideas, plans, experiences and accomplishments; provide a place to study; allow a child to explore the wonder of every day through walks, etc.

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The underlying assumption is that the child will learn through doing and through play, in a stimulating environment which will encourage him to explore, to problem-solve, to develop satisfying relationships. But there is often a wide gulf between articulation of goals and implementing them; the proof of the pudding is in the eating. Does the program really look that way? Direct quotations from the observers' notes best answer that question.

> *I've been procrastinating doing a narrative about Valley View for over a month, because I tend to hesitate to verbalize and analytically dissect beautiful things. The place was alive with activity -- different activities -- serving different needs, interest, styles and moments of different children's lives 15/. . . I got a strong impression of simply: a lot of kids having a lot of good times with a lot of adults having a lot of good times with a lot of kids having a lot of good times! One young teacher (who'd never taught elsewhere) mentioned to me that it really was nice not to have to make kids be involved in activities and just to have them come when they wanted to, and she added -- in a mildly puzzled way -- that she couldn't understand how people could teach in any other way. She was 'directing' (i.e., the adult-in-charge) a large group activity of making colored frosting. The kids were enthralled and shining, and the activity had an awesome continuity; it was going strong when we began observing, and over two hours later when we were leaving, there were still kids frosting away.*

Another observer noted:

> *When I walked in the children were all sitting at tables in the very proper way I had seen snack period organized in other centers. I was not prepared when the person taking roll turned out to be a boy perched on top of an overstuffed chair with his feet on the arms. He then selected tables to come up for snack while the staff stood on the side-lines and teased him and the other children about the choices being made. The children came up to the table which held piles of buttered toast and helped themselves to jelly, either thick or thin as they wanted, and then went back to the table to eat their toast and milk. Everyone cleaned up himself without any intervention from teachers and a nearly invisible transition to the morning activity period took place. . .*

And another, observing the early morning program:

> *I felt as though I didn't go to work this morning -- I visited the rumpus room of a well-run home with mother, young married sister, brother home from college, high school senior brother, and thirty 6 to 11 year old brothers and sisters. The characterized adults were happy, interested, involved and warm. The thirty children were free, busy, quiet, active, and friendly.*
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> *The rumpus room was in one large room, divided by a folding partition, with a wide doorway between the sections. One section was used by young children, the other by the older ones. Children have free access to both areas. On the one side, a ping-pong table, very much used, and a large square table dominated the center area of the room. A six inch high platform was set up like a small, intimate den with overstuffed furniture, chairs, coffee table, magazines, games, paint sets all well within reach. At one time 20 boys and girls were sitting or sprawled on the furniture interested in an on-going conversation with the high school boy about batting averages and favorite baseball teams.*
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> *Girls were busy laying out a seven inch plastic ribbon on the floor in anticipation of a game which they made up. Their rules included taking shoes off and following the ribbon pattern with feet and hands, not unlike the game of 'Twister'. A desk, a teacher's desk anyplace else, was used the entire morning by a boy who was laboriously reading the funny papers and filling out a 'send for free' form, and two boys who seemed thoroughly happy sifting through their hands small colored fish bowl pebbles as they filled bottles made into candle holders.*
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> *Younger boys crawled around the room and under the ping pong table and one even found a very nice private hiding place where he sat in sleepy comfort until ready to start something else. Two boys were carefully peering into waste paper baskets which had children's names on them and were used for holding one's private cubby articles. These boys were looking to find out which basket held the largest baseball mitt; an on-going topic of discussion involving everyone in the room. The record player was on in this room and in the kindergarten room.*

15/ Examples of activities all running concurrently: *singing and movement, playing ping-pong, looking at flowers, painting while chatting with one another, talking to the teacher and helping her with her work, frosting cup-cakes, cleaning up after making candle-holders, getting ready to play baseball.*

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When it stopped some child, unfailingly, selected another record.

The room where the younger children were playing was very well equipped; six children were in it the entire morning. Three girls carefully moved large wooden blocks into a wall which surrounded their play area and spent their time with dolls in dramatic play. Three boys were on the carpeted floor in the middle of the room with tinker toys; they built very magnificent and unusual planes which they flew around the room.

Two of the older boys took their bikes, which had been parked in the far room, and sitting on them with feet on the ground 'tricycled themselves' past the active children, to their cubbies to pick up musical instruments and out the door to take lessons.

Three of the older girls disappeared during the morning. The teacher said they were especially taken by a very cute two-year-old boy in the nursery room but the two-year old's problem was too much attention at home and so she had asked the girls to read to several of the nursery school children in the morning and then they could play with the little boy in the afternoon.

Everycne at Valley View -- staff, children, parents -- seems to be actively glad he or she is there -- and it all seems to happen to a great degree because of the unusual insights and abilities of the director. One observer reports the following incident which represents, through its feeling, the extraordinary tone of this center:

Making an observational round, I noticed Marnie and a little boy standing by a bush, apparently intently engaged in something. But they were too far away for me to see exactly what they were doing so when I was saying good-bye to Marnie, I asked her about it. She said that the boy, looking dejected, had come past her open office door several times carrying a bottle in which he keeps a pet moth. She invited him in and they had a talk which culminated in going out to get a flower for his moth . . .

I am speechless . . .

and so were we all.

Children's Centers: Some Further Observations

In our descriptions of Surf Blvd. and Valley View we have tried to give the reader a flavor of the good things which happen in Children's Centers. Most good centers share many of the characteristics described. Centers also develop and experiment with program facets which give them a unique flavor, and which appear to meet particular needs of children and parents in some very positive ways.

Wide-Age Grouping

At another center in the Valley View district, which moved in 1970 to vacant class rooms in a Junior High School 16/, we saw an unusual -- for Children's Centers -- use of wide-age range groupings. Preschool, kindergarten and primary age children regularly played together, separated only at certain specific times for safety, eating or special instructional periods. The director noted that the program worked exceedingly well, the younger children learning from the older -- particularly language skills -- and the older enjoying helping the younger ones in the role of older brother or sister.

At Valley View, we observed a striking lack of aggressive behavior, name-calling, bickering, etc. We noted the same phenomenon in several other programs where children were not segregated by age. Some centers claimed that age segregation reduces behavior problems; but these were settings which tended to be plagued by lack of space and adequate equipment. The indoor environment at Valley View was designed to facilitate wide-age grouping. It provided a number of insulated units where children could find supplies and settle down in groups of two or three, secure from intrusion. Outdoors there was a variety of different kinds of spaces, large grassy areas, a big sand area, shaded patio and equipment to go with it. There were small, cozy areas near the buildings, and open areas further away from over-close adult supervision. Without adequate space this program probably could not have worked.

Children and Parents With Special Needs

Other centers seemed to have a particular knack for dealing with 'problem' children. One small center tucked in the corner of the elementary school yard seemed to offer real help to

16/ The director hopes to involve junior high students in the program to meet their needs for supervision and interesting things to do, as well as the younger children's need to be in a family-like environment.

troubled children and their parents. In the words of the director (a warm and gracious non-credentialled former teacher with an informal manner and the endearing habit of seeking other people's opinions):

> *Children are happier here -- so-called problem children seem to be better here, perhaps because we have a relaxed staff, a happy staff. There is not a lot of pressure. There are fewer children here than in the other centers and our staff is very child-oriented. The psychiatric social worker attached to the Children's Centers staff likes this center.*

The director not only takes children from the Educationally Handicapped classes, but is quite willing to accept those who have had difficulties in other centers. School teachers work closely with center staff to help these special-needs children (Many are on medication. A number are hyper-active; one is an epileptic who once had as many as 20 seizures a day in another center and now is down to one or two a month). The day we interviewed the director, she had talked with four different elementary teachers about center children.

As we talked, the kindergarten teacher came in to discuss the epileptic child whose behavior on the school playground at noon had been disturbing other teachers and children. The director decided to keep him with center children at lunch time, and felt he would be a much happier child as a result.

Often parents come to center staff asking for help in dealing with their children's problems at school: *They have a feeling of quiet desperation, a what-do-you-want-me-to-do-with-my-child, get-rid-of-him? look about them.* Frequently, the Children's Centers are blamed by teachers for contributing the most "problem" children to the schools as though in some way the centers breed bad seeds. Needless to say, directors resent this attitude on the part of some school personnel. From our observations, it would appear that without the centers to support children and families and be their advocate in relationships with the schools, the problems would be vastly aggravated 17/.

The program here provides a wide variety of high quality art and music experiences, all handled in a low key individualized way which enables all children to participate with pleasure. Staff are flexible, casual, warm and talented in a number of areas. As we observed one afternoon, one particular excellent art teacher was helping children do sand-casting in the sandbox. While they created their masterpieces -- bowls and ashtrays and vases, which they later proudly took home to their parents -- school friends gathered to watch admiringly. (The extended day program shares the school playground; school children mingle freely with center program children, creating a lively, sometimes difficult, melting-pot which staff handles with equanimity and grace, helping children solve disputes with a minimum of intervention.)

We were struck with the manner in which this center, in a busy, highly urbanized, lower socio-economic area of the city, was able to provide an island of tranquility, of unpressured relaxation and warm support, of quiet creativity along with stimulating learning experiences for children, and undoubtedly some well-deserved comfort for their parents.

Persistent Problems

Because they are part of a large organizational system which seems doomed, like most institutions, to march inexorably towards growing bureaucratic controls, Children's Centers like Surf Blvd. and Valley View have had to make a special effort to break out of the mold. Only where the director displays unusual leadership qualities and receives district support does program really seem to get off the ground. In several centers we saw evidence of innovative approaches to providing learning experiences in warm, caring, home-like environments where children could relax from the pressures of school. In other centers, there were problems which seemed insoluble. Often these problems can only be solved at levels in the bureaucracy far removed from responsibility to a center program director. Most problems revolve around space, equipment, staffing and all these hinge on questions of money -- is it available and can it be allocated? Here are some examples of problems we encountered. In one center the winter observer noted:

> *In this center one of the biggest problems is a lack of space and adequate equipment. The indoor facilities, small by any standard, were required to house thirty children; on a rainy day the result was semi-chaotic. Inadequate deployment of staff compounded the problem. When the children play outdoors, as they usually do, they have only a small yard*

17/ The tremendous burdens one-parent families, usually single mothers, undergo was brought forcibly home to us one day when a little boy, disheveled and sooty, rushed to the center to report his house with everything in it had burned to the ground that morning. It was no childhood fantasy; indeed the house had burned and the mother was left to deal with the crisis alone.

and must share an additional area with the adjoining Junior High school. Because the principal of the nearby elementary school has provided little support, and distance makes its use awkward, facilities are further limited.

Centers which must share facilities with other school programs apparently fall rather easily into a step-child relationship unless someone -- and someone with clout -- actively pulls them out. The summer observer at this same center noted:

> *What appeared to be a somewhat rigid school-oriented program in the winter has become an open classroom setting in the summer. Children were deeply involved in a number of interesting activities including making macrame' and puppets, hatching spider-eggs in a blanket, tending the many animals, including a rooster, and just dreaming in a private-place corner equipped with a mat on which to lie.*

The difference appears to be related to three things: 1) the director, relieved from the pressures of school programming, could try out ideas she had observed in another open classroom setting. 2) Summer staff included a number of young people not bound by traditional education-philosophy stereotypes and 3) more space was available with the end of the regular elementary and junior high school session.

A number of changes suggested by a teacher attempting to open up the restricted environment of the winter program were never implemented, apparently due to lack of follow-through on higher official levels 18/. Lack of space, indoors and out, nearly always dooms program unless some innovative ways of dealing with the problem and expanding the environment (by use of community facilities, busing, flexible scheduling and staffing patterns, etc.) are put into operation.

In one center the director had tried to get tables for her new center, but was told that there was no money. She shared her problem with parents and they sold $1400 worth of peanuts to get the sorely needed tables. The company promptly went on strike and four months later the tables arrived unassembled. A plea to the district for janitors to assemble them brought the reply that it would be a month before they could get around to it. Finally two teachers put them together, but the order is still not complete. Frequently teachers devote their time, often off-duty, to securing supplies and designing and building equipment because it is not available through official channels. This has positive benefits -- it increases program creativity and a sense of community -- but it reflects the lack of outside support for the program.

In many districts, transportation, or lack of it, is a great problem. The centers could do a great many more exciting things in the community and surrounding areas if cars or buses were available. School buses are expensive and rarely available (the most any center seems to be allowed is 3 full-day trips a year); to hire buses costs between $.60 and $.75 a child and this money must come out of parents' pockets. Many districts are now refusing to permit transportation of children in the cars of personnel unless specially authorized because of the cost of insurance, the danger of accidents and lawsuits. For centers with little on-site space, this means real hardship for the children, many of whom need enrichment programs and whose parents cannot take them to places like the zoo, Marineland, the beach and tide-pools, etc. Being within walking distance of parks and city recreation departments facilities is a necessity for such centers; where such facilities are not available program suffers.

Concerns of Center Directors

What did directors of these Children's Centers want the Office of Child Development and the public to understand about school age programs? Uppermost were parent needs, which are particularly great in the Children's Centers. The stringency of eligibility requirements, which severely limits accessibility and forces children out if parents' salaries exceed the minimum salary level, disturbs directors; not only do they deplore the fact that children are pushed out of programs, often when they need them the most, but that parents are penalized for attempting to better their lives and those of their children. A more liberal fee scale is a universal wish on the part of directors, as well as some provisions for two-parent families who need care and whose income is not high enough to permit them to afford private care. (The result, observes one director, frequently is to leave 8 to 11 year olds to their own devices.) The length of waiting lists appears to attest to the need for care.

Next came program needs, particularly in the way of more equipment and instructional materials, and volunteer help: *We could use retired carpenters, firemen, workers of all kinds.* The

18/ The teacher, exhausted by efforts to improve the program on her own, observed: *Change is harder to promote if you're at the bottom of the pile.*

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desirability of developing mutual-benefit liaisons with other components of the educational system such as the junior high schools was voiced by one director.

Last but not least comes the plea for recognition of the school age program as being important, if not more so, and more complex in many ways, than that for preschool children: *Teachers who work with this age child have to be so much better prepared; staff should be looked at very carefully.*

Summary

Children's Centers provide impressive advantages -- among them low cost, proximity to schools (thereby relieving transportation problems and providing support for the child in the school environment), access to resources (staff, counseling and health services, equipment and food which can be purchased in quantity at wholesale prices, etc.). There are disadvantages as well. Directors must spend a great deal of time seeking ways to de-school the setting and work within regulations which seem to multiply in logarithmic progression, the most recent being increasingly restrictive federal guidelines. Sharing a site with other programs creates additional problems. In spite of the difficulties, however, the Children's Centers -- particularly those we have cited - provide comprehensive services for a large segment of the working, one-parent population. Our observations lead us to believe that they deserve more widespread recognition and support for the role they play.

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CHAPTER VII

PUBLIC SPONSORSHIP: THE WELFARE DEPARTMENT AND DAY CARE FOR THE POOR

There is yet another option for school age care open to working mothers, although the power of choice does not really reside with the parent nor even, in many instances, with the care-givers. Some centers provide care specifically for poverty level families. We observed a number of facilities which were contract centers 1/ for the Department of Social Welfare. Understanding the organizational structure of these centers proved to be a challenge. The number of different agencies and funding sources often made a complicated maze in which it was easy to lose the analytical thread; these complexities often had their effect on program and frequently, making it work was a real exercise in administrative logistics for directors. Many of the latter appeared to be graduates of a very exhaustive (or exhausting,depending on their physical stamina) course in How to Deal with Impossible People and/or Systems. We admired the ingenuity and equanimity with which many center directors and staff met what appeared to be some very limiting constraints on providing services to both parents and children. Among the challenges they had to meet were uncertain financial support (better known as overnight cutoffs of state and federal funds), problems with physical space and sometimes having to make do with hand-me-down physical facilities, trying to get adequate staff and pay them decent salaries and -- perhpas the most frustrating of all -- trying to work with governmental agencies whose controlling interest and inflexible regulatory policies deprived center staff of the autonomy necessary to develop a program which meets parents' and children's needs in better than merely mediocre ways.

In addition, they had to cope with the special needs of a group of parents who, perhaps more than others, often have difficulty for a number of reasons -- economic or otherwise -- dealing with responsibilities, are poor, fearful, alone -- in short, need many extra services. The children, in turn, reflecting these family characteristics appear to have a number of behavior problems with which staff must deal 2/. In many ways contract centers and those which must rely on some other organization for their existence have double trouble -- they have many of the problems of proprietary agencies (with few of the benefits) and of Children's Centers as well. In spite of the constraints, however, we found a number of these programs to be providing some unusual and valuable benefits for both parents and children.

The families served by a contract center are generally brought to it by caseworkers, rather than seeking it out directly, as parents do other centers. Parents and children are a captive audience, so to speak, told when they may come and when they must go 3/. Although there is diversity in ethnic group and geographical location, they have at least one thing in common, and that is their poverty and their welfare status. While 50% of a Children's Center clientele may be on welfare, 100% of the families at a contract center are in that category. Whether black or Anglo or Mexican-American, living in the inner-city or in semi-urbanized transitional zones, they are in greater need of support services on the whole than any other group of child care users. Centers whose program really works meet these needs by being community centers which can provide services to all age levels.

We have chosen to describe in detail two centers serving welfare recipients and other poverty level groups -- one white, one black. These case studies hopefully will shed some light on the constraints which regulation by an outside agency create, as well as some of the unique ways in which such school age programs can help whole families to function better.

The Valley Family Center; The Welfare Mill Grinds Exceedingly Small

The type of services provided by this center is spelled out in the information sheet circulated to prospective users:

1/ Contract centers agree to deliver child care services to recipients of aid in exchange for program funding by the State Department of Social Welfare using Title IV-A funds.

2/ We say "appear to" since many of the so-called behavior problems of school age children are the result of adults' inability to structure the environment in such a way as to reduce frustrations and encourage constructive problem-solving behavior.

3/ Working mothers live forever in the shadow of the eligibility requirement. When they have begun to meet with success in their struggle to get off the welfare roles, they must remove their children from the program. As one director notes, *Small wonder that one of the major functions of the Department of Social Welfare is to teach people to subvert the system and to do lip-service to the rules and regulations, to get around them in whatever way possible."*

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The Valley Family Center, a service of a United Way Charity, provides licensed group care serving preschool children ages two and one-half to kindergarten and school age children in the first through sixth grades. The day care service is part of the family center program which also includes housing, personal and group counseling, and job preparation services as well as a variety of interest groups for all ages. The center has a cooperative funding arrangement with the Department of Public Social Services.

Eligibility is restricted to children of mothers who qualify for Title IV-A child care funds, as determined by the Department of Public Social Services worker assigned to the center. The only mothers using the program, therefore, are those who earn less than $417.00 a month, thus making them AFDC recipients, and who have a Medi-Cal card (i.e., receive medical coverage under the State aid program, administered by the counties) or are eligible for food stamps. Mothers must be employed, actively seeking work or in the WIN training program (now defunct in many areas due to funding cuts) 4/. Mothers pay no fee for the day care service, whose weekly cost per child is approximately $50.00, comparable to that at Surf Blvd.

The 100 children enrolled in Valley Family Center 5/, which has an average daily attendance of 93, live in a bleak, colorless area surrounding the three-year-old day care facilities, whose contemporary, aesthetically pleasing design contrasts sharply with the ticky-tack apartment buildings (already losing their paint although not old) and the light industry, much of it aerospace, gasping for economic survival.

Open from 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., it serves two meals a day, a hearty breakfast and lunch, and a snack from its own kitchen, for which it has a full time cook. The children, all of whom attend the elementary school across the street, are divided into five groups according to grade level; the school age program serves the first through sixth grades only since the kindergarten is considered part of the nursery school 6/. At the moment there are no sixth graders; the director notes that by this age they become bored and want to be more independent: *They begin acting-out and develop behavior problems.* The drop in enrollment of older children, a typical phenomenon, begins with the fifth-graders, of whom there are only five. The majority of children are between the ages of six and eight.

Program and Staffing

Luckier than many with respect to physical setting, the center is housed in a complex of modern, well-lighted and carpeted buildings, with direct access to the outdoor play areas. Unfortunately, the design lends itself best to a program for young children; the yards are small and barren of large muscle equipment 7/. A good deal of thought has been given by staff to the indoor spatial arrangement, in an attempt to keep the plan flexible and retain the children's interest in activities which include much dramatic play, block building, reading and game-playing (cards, chess, marbles, etc.). Indoor play rooms feature a number of insulated areas designed to encourage continuity in play as well as to provide privacy. Program is kept flexible to provide maximum choice and autonomy, which, the director points out, *children in this population group desperately need.* Our observer comments:

My impression of the SCAMPER (extended day) program was that it worked very much like a Saturday morning community center program in that children chose to come to the center and chose to find something to do. Some of the children played with house props; some preferred to be near adults, playing chess or sitting on the sofa reading. Some of the children found a central theme and the opportunity to build on it with their own ideas, such as those who were involved in dramatic play with the adult and who later perpetuated the dramatic play by telling stories, writing, putting on make-up etc. The only ones who appeared not to find what they wanted were those of high energy at that moment who were running and jumping into pillows on the slide board or through hallways and doorways. I thought they really might have come

4/ "Actively seeking work" is defined as being registered with the California State Employment office and following up on prospective leads furnished by the office, private employment offices and/or classified ads: *Eligibility for day care on a looking for work basis may continue for no longer than 60 days.*

5/ Next year, 75% of the enrollment will be school age.

6/ Some of the parents do not want to send their children to kindergarten and so the center keeps them in preschool for the entire day.

7/ The lack of equipment is due in part to the newness of program, but there is another factor as well. One of the difficulties in being a community center sponsored by a charity which receives public donations is that beggars cannot be choosers. On the playground is a large turtle sculpture which cost $700.00, but which gets virtually no use. An elegant flag pole, also costing $700.00, adorns the front of the building and is regularly inspected by a legionnaire to make sure the flag is flying, but there are no swings or climbers in the yard.

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to play basketball, touch foot ball or just to whoop it up in large areas -- but the outside area had nothing in it and the inside gym room was ill-equipped for their needs.

We found the center exceedingly pleasant when the program worked as it did one summer morning with about 9 or 10 children in a very large room, some baking a cake and frosting it, others curled up on large pillows in a corner, reading books and occasionally visiting quietly. One boy worked alone in a private corner constructing an elaborate building with Lincoln Logs. *It takes a large amount of space,* noted the observer, *to offer the relaxed atmosphere and the privacy to some children which we saw this morning.*

The center tries to maintain an open classroom environment. In the past teachers were assigned to work with separate groups, but more and more the children, by seeking to flow freely from one group to another, altered the system. The center supervisor sees this as the only sensible way to manage a school age program and would like to have more of an open classroom approach, but this means having a staff really tuned into one another: *Otherwise, it is easy for children to get lost in the shuffle. These children are very much in need of individualized attention.* We watched as the boy who had been engaged in the Lincoln Log play became involved in an escalating dispute with another boy; the teacher arbitrated the quarrel and stemmed the mounting hostility skilfully, without direct intervention, by perceptive questioning which helped the boys do their own problem-solving.

Staff here are particularly mindful of the needs of these children who may be alternately rejected, manipulated, or smothered with attention by mothers trying to cope with their own mixed-up lives. The goals of the program, to give the maximum number of choices and autonomy, are determined to a great extent by the background of the children, who at the same time need a great deal of individual attention and guidance because of their frequently unstable home environments. We discussed some of the problems of providing care for the older child, and these children in particular, with Mrs. J., the director, a warm, perceptive young woman with a distinguished background in early childhood education:

Most of my experience has been with preschool children; it took me a long time to get a feel for the school age child. They need a lot more freedom and independence. At the same time, the children we serve need structure. Many of these children are scared and very early get involved with gangs. The center provides a home base which enables them to stay away from gang life a little while longer.

She then came to a common theme running through the score of school age care:

By the time children are ten or eleven they are tired of child care, and they don't like being in the center. I've really been wrestling with the problem of what to do with children when they get to this age. I've had some of them in the nursery school helping the teachers there, but I really feel this program is lacking in terms of meaningful things to do.

One of the problems is being solved by time; the center, only three years old, is now beginning -- Mrs. J. notes with satisfaction -- to settle down. Another is the lack of outdoor space and large muscle equipment. Much of the acting-out behavior about which staff complains is, no doubt, due to this lack. Making school age care work, notes our interviewer, takes:

. . . immediate accessible transporation in order to give these children the large muscle outlets they need. There is a large school playground (all of the children in the center attend this school and therefore require no to-or-from school busing) across the street but there is not a tree on it and it is free only from 12 noon to 4:00 p.m. -- the very smoggiest time in this area.

On one March afternoon, cool but not cold, no one was outside at the center; there was a great deal of dramatic play, reading, and card-playing, but no large muscle activity, on a day which would have been perfect for ball games and other active sports.

The center does have access to two donated vans, an arrangement which, while not unlimited, is better than most centers have in the way of transportation facilities. (Theoretically the center can get county buses but these are used primarily for pick-up and delivery; they might get them for three hours at a time, which does not make a very long trip). Having the vans available means that the center can take frequent trips and does, once a week, to the museum, zoo, park, neighborhood playgrounds, etc.

One of the unusual things which the children were allowed to do, not seen in other facilities, was the riding of bikes around the community, supervised by staff. The frequent occurrence of bike riding apparently saves the sanity of both staff and children, both of whom run out of ideas

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to keep interested and occupied. Some of the children bring their own bikes, while the center borrows some; a few bikeless children ride along in the van which accompanies the riders, and trade off with them when they get to their destination. The rides are well supervised: in addition to the van, two girl staff members ride with the bicycle riders and a male staff member brings up the rear on a motorcycle to keep track of everyone. Our observer writes of one such summer ride:

> *We happened to arrive on the day of their big bike trip to a park several miles away. Following them on their journey it soon became apparent that their most complex piece of equipment was in fact the city itself: and that numerous hassles of production in terms of making it a successful expedition served as a highly successful challenge to what competencies they had already developed in a) biking, b) dealing with the urban environment. The amount of work, care, organization, and sheer sweat that the adults put into the trip was phenomenal. They also risked considerable liability, but as someone pointed out, no matter what they do they are liable* 8/

The observer's commentary gives a clue to one of the essential ingredients in making this program work -- a dedicated staff. Dedicated they must be, for although they are required to have the qualifications of Children's Centers teachers, they do not receive equal pay. Salary schedule is set by the Department of Social Services, which allows 15 teaching positions for the center. One of the biggest headaches, apparently, is finding time for staff to really meet together and plan for integrated program. As part of the program's goals the director feels that it is exceedingly important for these children to see adult relationships which are friendly and demonstrate problem solving.

Living with "The System"

One of the most demoralizing aspects of their work, for staff, is the restrictions placed on group care by the rules and regulations imposed by the welfare system, administered by the Department of Social Services. Not only are staff salaries limited, but center autonomy in making policy is severely curtailed, if not non-existent. Eligibility restrictions are particularly frustrating; as an example the Department (via the case worker) wanted all the children to be three years old and toilet trained, in spite of the fact that the center is equipped to handle younger children. The director points out:

> *We finally talked them into letting us have two and one half year olds, but the worker insists they must be toilet-trained. We feel this regulation is too strict. There are some younger children who would profit by our program, especially since we have a good ratio of adults to children. One of the difficulties is that the interpretation of standards and guidelines varies with the individual case worker.*

But the problem for Valley Family Center is magnified by the fact that the system is so completely in control of all facets of their operation. In addition, they must deal not only with one other agency but two, each of which has its own case workers. This apparently creates a rather intricate arabesque of social interaction in which there is some stepping on toes:

> *Case work service here seems rather complicated. There are two workers who operate out of the charitable organization with a supervisor for case work aides who evidently do some of the direct contacting with parents. The Department of Social Services has its own social workers; every parent has a Department of Social Services case worker. In addition there is a Children's Service worker who comes by regularly to check on attendance. Evidently her main job is to see that Department of Social Services is getting its money worth. Much of the social work is seen by staff to be of dubious service* 9/.

In addition to having their autonomy severely limited by controlling agencies, the center -- dependent on state and federal sources as well as local contributions for its financial support -- is at the mercy of political decision-makers and must live in an unstable funding arrangement in which money may be withdrawn at any moment. Instability of funding is perhaps the most critical deterrent to making program work. Compounding these problems is a delicate relationship with the community, a public-relations commitment which requires the utmost in tact -- and a great deal of time on the part of administrative staff.

8/ It should be noted this "urban" environment is semi-rural compared with the inner-city. Such a trip would be difficult if not impossible to carry out on crowded city streets but in this still-suburban area bike riding is a safe activity, carried out as it was under close staff supervision.

9/ An agreement has been reached whereby when one social worker is working closely with a family, the other case workers stay out of the way.

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Parent-Center-School Involvement

While federal guidelines for Title IV programs require parent involvement and community-based control, the Parent Advisory group at the center, whose original purpose was to be a decision-making body, is in fact rendered helpless by Department of Social Services control. But there is a close relationship with parents and school, determined by the rules and regulations; parents must attend parent meetings and must sign children in and out daily. There is thus much informal contact between parents and teachers 10/.

Contacts with the elementary school are purposely limited and discussions between teachers and center staff are actively discouraged. A mimeographed policy statement is given to all parents, noting that it has been established *to place the first line of responsibility for decisions regarding the welfare of the children in our program where it belongs -- with the parent* and specifying that school personnel must contact parents directly in case of illness or misconduct, keeping the center as the last and temporary resort. There is thus no contact between school and center teachers regarding individual children, and the latter have no picture of the child's relationship with his elementary school teacher, nor is any responsibility taken by the center for seeing that home work is done 11/.

The ambivalence created by such policy, in face of the abrogation of power of the Parent Advisory Council by the Department of Social Services, tends to create a demoralizing climate, particularly for staff. In the face of many problems, staff does its best to meet the special needs of a segment of the population most benefited by good extended day programs -- families in which parental absence and lack of money spell trouble for children who need an extra dose of attention along with guidance, and a chance to make choices they may get nowhere else. In the final analysis, we suspect one ounce of care from the SCAMPER staff at Valley Family Center is worth a pound of case work.

Olvera St. Community Center

We visited two facilities serving Mexican-American families, both of them contract centers, which were striking, we felt, in the manner in which they reflected the warm, family-oriented characteristics of the population they served. Olvera St., located in East Los Angeles, is in the heart of the Mexican-American community.

The director of Olvera St., Mrs. V., is black. She combines the commitment, energy and efficiency of other black directors we have known with the warmth of the people for whom she provides services -- an exceedingly pleasant melange of virtues. Thirty-eight school age children are enrolled in the combination center, which cares for thirty preschoolers as well. The parents, all but five of whom are welfare recipients on AFDC (Aid to Dependent Children), pay no fee; the center is funded by the Department of Social Services 12/. Begun in the pre-Title IV 1960's, it was part of a federally-funded research and demonstration pilot project as a work-experience training program for AFDC mothers who were to be trained as teacher-aides in four day care centers in Los Angeles. Mrs. V. has been with the program since its inception 13/.

Entering the community center building owned by the United Way, one is greeted not by the typical cholo wall-writing that defaces the buildings in Spanish-speaking neighborhoods but by a magnificant mural done, not in "railroad station" style as one observer put it, but in gorgeously large Mexican-American cultural symbols. The center is open from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and has a cook who is perpetually available to the children to provide a breakfast, hot lunch, morning and

10/ Although there is much formal case work -- perhaps in spite of it -- it falls to staff to develop warm informative relationships with parents and children. The director notes of staff: *They've done a terrific job. They go out of their way to help, meeting after work, sometimes on Saturdays and Sundays.* Often teachers take children home overnight with them. The director makes it clear this is on their own time, not within the liability of the center.

11/ There is contact between the center and the school through the tutor aide, a volunteer trained in counseling and guidance, who acts as liaison with the school. A formal tea is held for teachers by the center each year.

12/ Cost per child is figured at $43.00 per week.

13/ Directors who have been with a program for a number of years, particularly from the beginning, seem to have a head start on "making-things-work"; they have a chance to learn to develop coping strategies, what to take seriously and to pass by, and especially how to out-maneuver bureaucratic bungling.

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afternoon snack and a heavy snack at 5:00 p.m.; often the cook stays after hours and volunteers her time. The older children cook, too, helping out for parent meetings by making Mexican dishes.

Family Involvement

Family participation pervades the climate in this center. Unique for its emphasis on the importance of the family to the well-being of the child, it is one of the few centers which encourages parents to keep children with them during the summer and does not penalize them by dropping children from the program. The center loses very few children except through eligibility restrictions; many children have been forced to drop out because of recent curtailment of funds. The center functions as an extended family for the children who move freely in and out of all the areas, along with the staff, junior high students who come in to read to the children, and the parents, who come to meetings once a month at the center 14/. Parent participation is considerable; in-service training is provided for parents and staff at the center.

Staffing and Program

Another unique feature of the program is the staff itself. All college graduates, they have had a great deal of practical experience as well in spite of the fact that they are young, none of them being over 25. There are a number of personable young men on the staff who provide boys and girls with a warm, big-brother/father image. All the staff are bi-lingual like the program itself. In addition, all except the aides are full-time which makes possible the kind of continuity in relationships, and program planning and setting-up, which seems to distinguish good from mediocre school age care.

The staff has been particularly skilled in their provision of arts and crafts activities, relating them to the need for identity which many of these Chicano children have and which drives them into gang activities as they get older. There is a great deal of equipment for art activities, including a potters wheel. Apparently, when the funding spigot is on, the flow of equipment is abundant and the center can afford to have materials which would make other directors green with envy.

Staff spends a great deal of time planning and preparing for activities, which the children are free to join at will. Children are assigned to home groups to make the children feel comfortable about having one person with whom to identify, but are free to switch from one to another during the course of the day. Each group has a special activity for the day, for which the teachers pass plans in to Mrs. V. The children are taken on trips away from the center at least once a week. Trips require careful advance planning since a request for the bus must be submitted two weeks ahead of time. A green Chevy van is at their disposal on 48 hours notice; Mrs. V. uses her own car for emergency transportation in case of accident, etc.

We found the response to our question *How do you handle it if a child has behavior problems?* unusual, compared with the typical response of many directors: *We look into the family situation for problems there.* Staff at Olvera St. assume, instead, that it is the center that is causing the problem. They try to improve that environment rather than trying to change the home and the family. In its emphasis on the centers responsibility to the child, Mrs. V. comments:

> *The problem does not always lie with the child but with the program: the staff within the center get together and decide what may be causing the trouble. For example, Steve had become a behavior problem and we tried to figure out why. We soon realized he needed to do things on his own, to initiate activities, so we worked hard to provide as many opportunities for this as possible. I'm certainly glad we caught it in time!*

Directors in those programs which work primarily with children who, without center help, might opt for a life of gangs, delinquency and violence, are acutely aware of the importance of diagnosing special needs before they become real problems. When children become too old to attend the center -- which Mrs. V. defines as being ready to be independent -- she encourages parents to

14/ One of the difficulties Mrs. V. notes is that of other children coming into the center, which apparently is a powerful drawing card in the community. A major problem occurs during the summer when there are many Neighborhood Youth Corps workers, some assigned to the center, some not, in the building. Mrs. V. points out:

> *The facilities are really not good for a summer program -- a group of kids work upstairs in an unorganized program, so there are too many teen agers hanging around. It's chaotic!*

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withdraw the children from the program. Occasionally, she notes, she has to work with them to help them understand the child's need to be on his own. Mrs. V. comments on the problems of school age care:

It's very challenging -- it keeps you on your toes! You have to keep up their interest and enthusiasm or you end up with behavior problems.

Rather than cite more statistics, we quote instead the notes of one of our observers which we feel capture the flavor and warmth of this child-oriented center. They illustrate graphically the exciting use of art in the program and the special qualities of the rather unusual staff. Our impression is that the center is trying to give back to these children some of the love and cultural warmth and richness that the cruel process of urbanization, with its poverty and alienation, has taken from the Mexican-American family. The observer notes:

This morning only boys were present. Usually four or five girls are present but the adults thought they must be sick. Everyone I saw this morning was on a first-name basis. Children were greeted by their first names and by the end of the hour I could place a name with every face (adults and children). Seemingly the adults respect the children as people with ability. This was shown when the children went off to school, singly, in pairs or in small groups. They gaily waved good-bye to the adult near them and headed for school some three blocks away.

The adults seemed proud of the children. They spoke only in glowing terms of what the children were doing. Several times an adult would leave the room and return with a picture or art project which some child had done to show to me. The room was filled with the work of the children -- the windows were painted with Easter flowers. A mural on the wall 7 X 7 feet was a work of art not only for design but for content on dinosaurs. Hanging from the ceiling were "God's Eyes" and interesting sun figures cut from aluminum pie tins made by the children. The walls and bulletin boards each had a theme. One contained maps and pictures of Indians. Another wall contained posters of Mexican-American community events and a poster "La Raza, Mexicano, Espanol, Latino, Hispano, Chicano, or whatever you call me, I look the same, I feel the same, I cry and sing the same".

The activity of the morning was centered around Mary, who sat at the craft table making papier mache Easter eggs seven or eight inches in diameter and who was immediately joined by several boys. Others went to the outside sand area where they climbed on the large structure. The windows looking onto this area gave them freedom, for an adult need not be present, yet the boys were under surveillance at all times. The art work was most successful because the glue was the right consistency, the paper was handy and a proper size, the glue pot was in the center of the table within easy reach by all. While working there was much bantering, getting up and moving about, being joined by nursery school children who wanted to see what was going on.

Other children watched the chicken eggs in the brooder. Jose had constructed the brooder from a cardboard box and a home made thermostat which controlled the heat by a light bulb. On the wall was a very simple, crudely drawn but clearly understandable, diagram of the thermostat. The boys were especially interested in how it worked.

The room was arranged with plenty of table and shelf space for storage of long-time projects. The table heights varied from adult size to small-child size. The shape of the tables varied fraom an L-shaped adult table for snack and lunch time to a medium-height craft table seating eight to a small table for two for quiet study. A carpentry bench was set up with tools handily available and the boy making a record box used the saw for cutting his dowel stick.

Careful planning and a competent staff makes for a smooth operation, notes the observer:

Every center should have a Ron, 25 years old, good natured and at ease with all. He was the one who greeted the older boys with a towsled head pat or a physical tussle or a serious conversation with a nursery-size child who announced "Ron, I didn't frow up today". He greeted the 3rd and 4th grade girls with "you look nice today" or "those are pretty shoes". For each he had an individual and warm greeting. It was Ron who noticed a small boy in the corner trying to tie his pant legs with a series of strings because he had ripped his jeans from cuff to crotch by pulling a loose thread. Ron noticed him trying to hold his jeans together and then suggested he could sew them for him. Ron found a needle and thread (in a box where they should have been) and with a fancy seaman stitch took 25 minutes out of his busy day repairing the jeans and the boy's dignity. Ron also individualized a boy's afternoon by putting the child in charge of the records, telling him to check out the records in a special notebook if the children wanted to take them to school and in discussing

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with him methods of keeping the records stacked in the box. The boy designed a center dowel stick to push through the hole of the records thus insuring himself control of the records. Ron, after discussion, let the boy do his own thing.

In the afternoon the first graders arrived at 2:10. They dashed over to the craft table in seemingly eager anticipation of the activity they would find there, and sure enough, Audra was working on candle making with real and interesting molds. The wax had to be cut into small chunks with hammer and screw driver and Audra didn't have to caution against hitting the table for she had planned well and had provided a large heavy piece of wood for this operation. Others joined Frank and Ron on the athletic field. About 2:30 the call "nutrition" was heard, and those who were not involved in pouring wax, helped themselves to cheese sandwiches and milk served in colorful blue and purple glasses. The cart, placed near the snack table by the cook, had been very neatly covered with wax paper waiting for snack time.

Around 3:00 o'clock a mass of boys and girls from the 2nd through 5th grade arrived. Their exuberance was contagious. They ran to the craft table, they dashed to check out balls, bats, soccer balls. Some went to the smaller outdoor area to climb on the structure. Two of the older girls played bounce ball against a wall in the nursery school area. The only checking by adults I saw was for the sports equipment, which was stored in a cupboard secured with a catch high up for adult use. Even then it was informal, for children were allowed to rummage around in the cupboard to find just what they wanted.

Something should be said about the preparation for the afternoon. At least a half hour before the children arrived the entire staff was setting up. Jose got out basketry materials. Audra was setting up the wax table. Frank and Ron were pumping up balls, placing balls with mitts, marking the balls in large letters ' girl's ball , boy's ball.' Frank set a box of cards and pencils on the table nearest the door where the children would arrive. Each child wrote his name and stated if he had or didn't have homework for that day. Later in the day Frank sorted the cards and after 4:15 those who had homework sat at any table they wished and did their homework. The adult in the room at that time was free to help any child who needed help.

The movement of the adults was smooth. When Frank was on the playing field, Ron was inside to help Audra or to be with individual children. He was able to spend 25 minutes sewing the child's jeans and not interrupt any part of the program. When Ron moved inside to have snacks with the older children, which mainly was reminding them to wash their hands, then Frank was outside playing ball.

It seemed to me that the buying and storage was particularly efficient. Someone knows how to buy supplies or to scrounge for possible projects. A small neat stack of cardboard boxes were ready to make into forts, or houses, A huge supply of inexpensive but very good cardboard was available. Wrapping paper was mounted on a cabinet with a self-cutter making for insured ease to cover tables or use in art projects but with a minimum of waste which cutting the paper with scissors often does. The cupboards were open, but I noted both children and adults put things away after use. Boxes were marked and were proper in size to fit whatever they were storing. The needle used by Ron was quickly found and easily put back. The puppet heads from an earlier project were stacked upright and carefully placed in a box. A box marked 'paper for school work' but with the caution 'use carefully' was out and easily available to homework users.

Every center should have a teen-age cantina just adjacent to the ball-playing and soccer field. Frank and Ron in a series of smooth operations supplemented each other on the playing field so that there was constant adult participation. The teen-age boys were sitting on a cement wall calling out friendly batting techniques. They often wandered into the room area to see what was going on; one was brought in by a school age boy to see the brooder with the chickens hatching. At one point during the ball game a nursery school boy was at bat and a teen-age boy stepped in to pitch to him. The interruption was friendly, fun and accepted by all as part of the game.

We found at Olvera St. a concentrated effort to provide a bi-lingual, cultural enrichment program in a warm, relaxed, non-didactic way. One thing which Olvera St. has to its advantage is time and an experienced director. It also has excellent, young staff -- warm and child-oriented, well qualified in terms of both college courses and work experience, male as well as female, and able to function smoothly as a group 15/. The director notes that if *you have a good*

15/ Mrs. V. has many male college graduate Chicanos on her staff; she worries about getting enough money for their salaries to keep them.

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staff, you can make the money go farther by having half time teachers. Having aides and volunteers to call upon is an added source of help which is apparently denied to proprietary centers. We noticed also that relatives are frequently pressed into service 16/. Making a program work in contract centers takes a determined effort to stay focused on program and strategies to make the rules and regulations work for and not against you.

Desert City Self-Help League: Hope for the Disenfranchised

In direct contrast to the hierarchical organization of Valley Family Center is an inner-city, non-profit program developed by and for the people it serves -- the poverty level black community of Desert City 17/. This center is not a Department of Public Social Services contract center. The Desert City Self-Help League sponsors two child care centers located on separate sites and differing in eligibility arrangements. At the time of the study they were dependent on federal funding as well as city departments, community service organizations and churches for their existence. They grew, however, not from the top but the bottom; they developed out of a grass roots movement by some young members of the black community, begun in an effort to upgrade the quality of life in Desert City's central district.

The time was the mid-sixties, remembered by many for a different kind of black commentary on the quality of life in another place -- the Watts Riots. No one was paid in the early days; the program was run strictly on volunteer enthusiasm. Headquarters were in a Baptist church in the central district of the city whose black population has increased steadily since Wourld War II. The League's original programs included a community beautification project, classes in secretarial skills, grooming etc., and a program to help teen-agers find after-school and summer jobs. With a small grant from the city and much volunteer help, including that of the Junior League, Project Tutor 18/ was established to help, on a one-to-one basis, children having problems in various school subjects; also, on a very limited basis, a small day care program was operated out of the Baptist church. The day care services grew sufficiently for the Self-Help League to approach Desert City Planning Council for a new and bigger location. The city gave them rent-free administrative space in the Health Department Building, and the child care facilities were moved in 1968 to two old houses in an area of the black community where *too many kids were being left alone* by persons unable to find or afford care for them.

Until recently the Self-Help League has been dependent primarily upon federal funding through the Office of Economic Opportunity. Unlike Valley Family Center it does not deal with an intervening welfare agency, but it is subject to the same instability of funding, and more so. When federal money became available the Self-Help League received funds for 1) a family counseling center, 2) a child care center and 3) a Head Start program. Until recent cut-backs in this program, the federal government was paying 75% of the costs of the day care center; the other 25% came from what parents could pay, and community donations. There are now two centers in operation, one in which parents of poverty level and below who are in training, employed or looking for work may place children free of charge, and one in which working mothers pay on a sliding fee scale 19/.

In the free center, economic need must be established for eligibility; many families are referred by the Department of Social Services. Besides the means test a medical report on the child

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16/ The volunteers at Olvera St. are recruited through friends and neighborhood flyers.

17/ Desert City has a long and distinguished history of public child care dating back to World War II Lanham days when centers were begun to accommodate children of mothers working in the plane factories and other defense industries. From the start, child care had an educational rather than custodial climate because of the numbers of early childhood educators involved. Traditionally, Desert City has also had excellent charitable nurseries begun just after the turn of the century, supported by community service organizations and, in the past, the affluent and socially prominent ladies who made up a sizable proportion of the population.

18/ The center director notes proudly of the tutoring program: *We're now ten years old.* The League now has four components -- 1) the job and New Careers programs, 2) Head Start, 3) the administrative and 4) the educational careers program services, including the tutoring program. The school age day care program appears to be more directly attached to the job and New Careers program but is affected to some degree by all of the components. Quarters are shared with Head Start and the Parents Education Program.

19/ Cost of care at the time of the study was $8.60 per child per week; for kindergarteners who receive a hot lunch, with vegetables and meat, the cost was $11.20. Any mother who earned over $600.00 a month paid the full cost.

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and a liability form for insurance purposes are filled out by the parents, most of whom know about the center beforehand from agency referrals. Of the 55 children enrolled 90% are black, 5% are Mexican-American 20/ and 5% American Indian and other ethnic groups; 38% are from one-parent families, while some are without families, wards of the court. Between one-third and one-half are from below poverty level. Only four families are above poverty level. The few parents who do not qualify for no-cost care in this center pay according to a sliding fee scale; the others donate services, such as taking cot sheets to the laundromat, or money when they finally get a job. One of the biggest rewards of her job, the director, Mrs. F., notes, is *seeing a parent who had been destitute come back in a year or two with a $150.00 donation!* One of the results of this arrangement, which provides a source of volunteer services, is inability to accurately predict income: *We might take in $200.00 a month or nothing!*

A state of flux -- in many ways, including financing -- seems to be a permanent way of life for the centers, and requires just the sort of director it has -- a warm but authoritative person indigenous to the community who well understands the mothers' and children's crying needs, and who knows how to get other people to help her meet them 21/. Mrs. F. knows and loves each child as her own and has the charisma to make other people love her. She and the other staff members must act *in loco parentis* because, as she points out, the mothers often cannot cope. When she calls them at work to tell them a child is ill, they tell her in desperation: *You'll just have to be his mother.* She feels that many of the children's problems such as malnutrition and neglect are caused not so much by poverty as by lack of parent education:

> -- *The children are without so much -- they are not properly fed. The parents don't understand that breakfast is important. They clothe their children improperly because they don't know how to budget. We have consumer education classes, taught by a nutritionist, that are free to the parents.*

She admits that it is hard for parents to go out at night because they're tired; classes are scheduled during the day or on week ends when possible.

Mrs. F's goal, as well as that of the centers and the Self-Help League's in general, is to make a many-pronged attack on the sources of failure which destroy productive lives in the poor black community. She is ultra-sensitive to both the mothers' and children's needs for feelings of self-worth; with the former, she feels that this is the first step to getting jobs and taking proper care of their children. Attention to health needs and providing medical services are a top priority; a substantial, nutritious breakfast is served at 7:00 a.m. when the center opens. This, plus a hot meal at lunch time for kindergarteners, is prepared in the central Head Start Nutritional Center, which turns out 1100 meals a day, and is brought by van to the center. (An afternoon snack is prepared in the small center kitchen). Referrals for medical care are made to the Desert City Service Center where doctors' and dentists' services are made available and free speech and hearing tests provided 22/. The women's auxiliary of a local church donates food, clothing and furniture. Physical examinations are required upon enrollment. Health charts are kept up to date, and frequently consulted if there is a behavior problem. A Head Start nurse comes in twice a week, and a dentist comes into one of the centers to make recommendations for care 23/. Although the center cannot officially take care of ill children, it renders many services in the event of illness and acc ident, such as taking children to the emergency hospital when the mother cannot leave work. The center has available for its use five Head Start buses for trips, but Mrs. F. uses her own car for emergencies. Federal funding covers the buses and insurance for the director's car when used to transport children in case of emergency.

20/ Because of its location within the city, Self-Help League serves mostly the black community, although they would not exclude qualified whites or Chicanos. However representatives of the Chicano community, after accusing the black community of excluding their children from the Head Start program, now have their own state funded program for Mexican-American children.

21/ The director lives just a few blocks from one of the centers, which puts her in close touch with parents.

22/ Counseling and social services for family problems, including pre-marriage counseling for teen-agers, are also provided by the center. Mrs. F. notes they have fewer problems now than in the past: *Everybody's going to school and broadening her outlook.*

23/ The center has its own medical coverage. Mrs. F. notes that most parents use their own Medi-Cal cards but medical bills are often paid by the center.

The center works in close harmony with the schools, particularly in the child-advocacy role. Teachers and center staff regularly exchange visits; school personnel, especially the nurse, often call the center to ask questions. Mrs. F. notes: *They have to; they don't really have much information about the child and his family. I steer them in the right direction.* She takes an active personal role, sitting in on school classes when she can and protecting her brood like a mother hen:

> *I get so mad at new teachers who send notes home about children's behavior -- and I know who the new teachers are! I go up there and educate 'em. I keep the notes that are disturbing to parents -- mothers are under pressure and are apt to discipline the kids (too harshly).*

Mrs. F. goes to the parents, literally, since they seldom come into the center, frequently sending older brothers and sisters to drop the children off:

> *I do a lot of social things (where I can be in contact with parents). I go to teas, fund-raising events, musical programs, community affairs, PTA meetings -- I make home visits in November and December, and in June and July I hold parent conferences.*

Clearly, one of the requirements for a director in a community-action program such as this is indefatigable energy. Another would appear to be direct physical and emotional ties with the community. Mrs. F's total commitment to her work stems, we suspect, from her identity with it. She brings to the job a long list of qualifications, including three years of college at Desert City State (*You'd laugh if I told you my major*), extension courses at University of California at Los Angeles and many years of experience as a volunteer for the Salvation Army, an elementary, Sunday School and Head Start teacher. Presently on loan from Head Start, she has been in charge of the centers' operation since 1968. Significantly, she notes that one of her special interests is science since it deals with *things that change.*

Space for the centers has tended to be short-term and shared. The recreation center in which one is located is soon to be torn down and relocated across the street; in addition to the child care center, it houses other community programs, classes for senior citizens and a preschool 24/. The no-cost center has been located since 1968, Mother Goose-like, in two teeny-tiny houses with an equally teeny-tiny back yard, covered with asphalt and not even one teeny-tiny tree. This spring the church next door wanted to start a half-day child care program, and the center was outgrowing its facilities, which it shared with the Head Start preschool program, so Mrs. F. began looking for property. She found it very near at hand; immediately behind the center was a building containing eight rooms, a small house and two yards with grass owned by the Self Help League (*We're going to have a fund-raining project,* notes Mrs. F, *to pay for it*). The new physical space is more ample, the building, though scarred by vandalism is carpeted and much better suited to school age children 25/. (The old buildings had seemed like doll's houses, adequate for preschoolers but not for older ones), with separate rooms for particular activities: i.e., a learning center with teaching machines and listening equipment, a block room, eating area, etc. Besides housing Head Start, the building also contains a store for parents. Sharing facilities with another program can be, apparently, both joy and headache; the center has the use of Head Start buses and kitchen facilities, which is a great boon to extended day care, but as an adjunct to the preschool program it must accommodate itself to the latter's needs. Without stable funding, the centers have been without a permanent home, and frequent moves have been difficult for staff and children both. In response to our question *What are your major goals for this program,* Mrs. F. exclaimed, *To become permanently established!*

As part of the non-profit program run on a shoestring, Mrs. F. must wear many hats, some simultaneously. Since loss of the social worker aide, she has fulfilled that role. Like most directors she finds bookkeeping a particularly onerous task and yearns for the services of a secretary, but she is as quick at figures as her other duties; she has all the fiscal facts at the tip of her tongue. She is kept busy checking schedules and has designed some forms for developmental charts (*The teachers complain that they are too lengthy!*) Besides herself there are six

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24/ We could never find more than two school age children to observe there, although during the summer more older children attend with younger siblings. Program there is relaxed and flexible, dictated by the children's needs and interests. Frequently they walk to the library half a dozen blocks away.

25/ Vandalism is a continuing fact-of-life with which staff must deal daily. When we arrived for the interview, a police helicopter was buzzing directly overhead. Mrs. F. explained, matter-of-factly: *They're after someone in the alley. Almost every day we're broken into and something stolen -- we lose more equipment that way.*

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staff members, of whom two are teachers and two assistant teachers in the school age program. Much of her help is volunteer; many of the part-time aides are parents and students (*Our staff here goes to school so much*) which means a great deal of the burden in planning and providing continuity falls on the director. All the teachers are female, between 30 and 40, predominantly black, with mostly preschool and kindergarten experience -- much of it in Head Start programs. Mrs. F. indicates staff/child ratio is roughly one to eight. This figure, however, includes not only teachers but part-time aides, National Youth Corps girls from high school and volunteers. Mrs. F. notes that one of the biggest limitations on achieving program potential is lack of regular, full-time staff *so teachers could have a six-hour day.*

The right kind of staff, and enough of it, are important if program goals for children are to be achieved. The stated goals, which closely parallel those of Head Start, are to help the children develop in language skills, as well as music and art; to these Mrs. F. adds her desire to help families become more aware of the child in the home. The director and staff try to keep close tabs on the individual child's needs and to explain them to the parents. We asked Mrs. F. what they do when a child has behavior problems. She replied:

> *We go over the child's health chart, then talk to the parents and try to find out what the child has been doing lately. We assign the child to a teacher on a one-to-one basis, find out what's new in the child's life -- we study his likes and dislikes, and can usually put our finger on the problem. We take pictures of the child and tape his voice in the class room. I always talk to the parents personally, especially since we lost our social worker aide.*

Flexibility is the key note of this center, so much so that it is unique in both the program and in the services it offers. The schedule changes from one day to the next, occasionally from moment to moment (*the children see to that!*). One day the schedule of activities planned by the teacher was 'tossed out the window' when a little girl brought her kitten to school. The highly child-oriented program is designed to respond to the children's needs and interests. More than that, there is no way of knowing who will be in attendance. A unique feature of the center is that it will take children for any length of time, any number of days in the week; parents are not required to send children regularly (although they do lose their place if they drop out for any particular session, i.e., summer). The center provides child care services on an un-scheduled basis to clients of the Department of Social Services; often a child will be accepted for an hour or two while the social worker takes the mother out to find an apartment, for example.

This system of flexible time allotment, unique in our study, prevents any real continuity of activity from one day to another. From the time of their arrival at 7:00 or 7:30 in the morning, children read, for the most part, or help the younger ones and the teachers in setting up trikes, activity tables, juice. The older children go outdoors after returning from school, playing jump rope, hopscotch, etc., until 3:00 p.m. when they go in to rest. After the rest period -- the only time older children are separated from the younger ones -- they engage in free play until they are picked up, often by older siblings. Because the center has free and ready access to bus transportation the children frequently go on trips.

Summer means an even more enrichment-oriented, flexible and varied schedule which relies heavily on city recreation department programs. The observer notes:

> *Summer is a combination of academic work, which continues year round since helping children succeed in school is an important component of the program, and casual fun (much emphasis is placed on water play -- pretend fishing, water tables, floating boats, watering flowers in pots -- as well as swimming lessons at the high school). There are magic shows (sponsored by the city recreation department), trips to Marineland and the Circus in Los Angeles (a night-time event attended also by teachers and parents), the public library, where they have reading and movies. Physical fitness is emphasized. The boys belong to the Pee-wee Division of Little League, in which they use inflated rubber bats! For girls, the emphasis is on grooming; a professional beautician comes to the center on Mondays. In fact, there are so many activities going on, Mrs. F. notes that she often recommends that parents keep children home the last few weeks of the summer if they have gotten too tired.*

In spite of the enrichment program, the trips and variety of activities, there are few older children in the program; when we observed, the oldest child in attendance was seven. Not only is the center, run in conjunction with Head Start, not set up for older children, but parents have not become acculturated to the idea of child care for children beyond preschool and kindergarten age. It has taken time for some to get used to the idea of care for younger children, let alone school age. The cultural pattern, shaped by economics, for the very poor dictates leaving children alone or with older siblings. Those children who are in the center tend to have been there a long time -- by the age of seven and eight they are beginning to get bored and restless: *It's lack of interest. There's nothing to challenge them in the program,* Mrs. F. notes, echoing the sentiments of Ms J. at Valley Family Center.

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Because our visit came at a time of transition and physical upheaval, it would be unfair -- nay, impossible -- to offer an evaluation of the program; but the mere fact that it is functioning is a tribute to the efforts of an entire community, and particularly the director. As long as the national economic situation is tight, the before and after school care will probably have to ride on the coat tails of the preschool Head Start program. The services it appears to be rendering parents are undoubtedly more worth while than a case work approach; it is as lucky for the mothers as it is unlucky for the over-burdened Mrs. F. that the social work component -- in an official sense -- is not present. Most valuable, perhaps, is the buffer the center provides between school and home; that understanding and communication between the two has been achieved, to whatever degree, is a spin-off of great importance, particularly for poverty-level families in the black community.

Nearly all the problems in such a program stem from the uncertainty of funding and the day-to-day coping, the let's-take-one-crisis-at-a-time approach which such a situation requires. We would guess that the success of the center is due for the most part to the fierce dedication and unflagging energy of Mrs. F., who is required to operate like a one-man band, simultaneously engaging in a dozen social roles. As a model for parents she is highly effective. Tremendously committed to and proud of the entire Self-Help League program, she devotes a great deal of time to fund raising and donation-securing; like Marnie at Valley View Children's Center, she is not afraid to ask for help in the name of the children and families the centers serve. She reports *really good community support* but adds: *We need even more, particularly from local businesses.* An outstanding example of organization and positive-thinking for mothers, she lives and breathes an I-Think-I-Can, Know-I-Can philosophy. She functions as secretary, social worker, school- home-visitor, official ambassador at social gatherings, bookkeeper, and community public relations representative-at-large, along with her other duties overseeing staff and running the center. The only role which is really distasteful to her, we suspect, is that of clerk-typist. Beyond the precarious financial situation which is at the root of all center's problems, lack of materials (*It's hard to be creative without them*) and space have been the major limitations with which she has had to work, as well as staffing shortages. The latter keeps her from realizing one of her goals for the program, that of giving children individualized attention. More staff would make more time available for planning program, always the time-snatcher in school age care.

What would happen to the centers without Mrs. F., who is on loan from Head Start, is anybody's guess; she is surely its mainstay, at the moment. Like other successful directors we have known, she obviously know how to sail the stormy seas of governmental bureaucracy and the craggy shoals of local politics with equanimity. She is, in short, a living example of how to keep a warm cool.

EPILOGUE: At the time of completion of our study, Desert City had agreed to assume the financial support which the federal government, because of funding cuts, would no longer provide.

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CHAPTER VIII

PROPRIETARY CENTERS: THE SKILLS RECREATION MODEL

A number of options are open to parents who can afford proprietary care. We learned that choices appear to be made on the basis of several variables, among which seem to be the kinds of experiences parents want for their children. A number of centers, typically located in suburban areas, appear to fall into a category we have loosely defined as sports-skills-oriented, a sort of middle and upper class YMCA which provides activities for a group that many school age programs have difficulty accommodating -- older children, and particularly boys.

The school age child, much more than the preschooler, needs space, and the further he or she progresses along the developmental continuum, the more of it he needs in which to sharpen his physical skills as well as his social ones; frequently the two develop in concert. Space, as we have noted, is an expensive commodity often in short supply and especially difficult for proprietary programs to acquire, particularly in urbanized areas.

Because private settings seldom are adjacent to school facilities, as is so often the case with the Children's Centers, they frequently become involved in elaborate transportation systems which can be a vast source of headaches unless owners are particularly resourceful. We have chosen one program (which has a number of component parts, including nursery school and kindergarten, before and after school care, and summer day camp and swim school) as an example of a well-coordinated and successful enterprise which seems to be meeting both parents' and children's needs in some specialized areas. The case study of another program, based on the same model but with some variations, points up some of the problems which plague the providers of care of school age children in general and the private entrepreneur in particular.

Chevron: Activity With Direction

Parents who come to Chevron (primarily through advertising and word-of-mouth) do so with a purpose -- to avail themselves and their children of the opportunities it offers for character-building through sports. The goals of the program are stated in its handsomely printed brochure:

> *With purpose there is progress. At Chevron it is our purpose to aid in developing character -- qualities of responsibility -- of leadership and self reliance -- while emphasising the individual's role in a group. By combining professional instruction with a complete and varied program, each boy and girl can recognize his potential and acquire the self-confidence and abilities necessary to reach it.*

Chevron was established in 1963 as a preschool and swim club; by 1967 the summer day camp and extended day program had been added. It consists of two facilities. The first, which is located two blocks from the ocean near stables, a lovely park with a lagoon a block away, and a number of undeveloped areas where children can go to hunt for snakes, lizards, etc., houses the preschool and extended day program as well as the office and a kitchen. The second facility, a mile or so distant, is the swim club, with two large pools, one a shallow training pool, and a wading pool and dressing facilities. Across the street from the swim club is a city park.

The nursery school/kindergarten/extended day activities are housed in two small, neat, attractive buildings joined by a cement court in which vegetables, expecially pumpkins, burgeon from two small planted areas. The indoor room which houses the extended day group in the early morning and late afternoon serves as a kindergarten during the day (the older children rendezvous in the park half a block away for early afternoon activities). What do they do on rainy days? *Don't tell us*, the Department of State Welfare Licensing workers sigh. The rooms are pleasant and well-lit, with rugs on the floors.

Behind the kitchen in this newly-added building which houses a washer and dryer (*indispensable*, notes the owner/director) is an unfinished storage/work-room which contains a seemingly infinite inventory of sports equipment -- roller skates, bows and arrows, baseball bats and mitts, tennis racquets; balls of every size, from baseballs to 16 inch rubber balls, volley balls, kick balls, footballs, ping-pong balls ; objects from Frisbees to golf clubs, jump ropes to ropes for tug-o-war, fish nets to volley ball nets. Besides equipment storage the room is used for woodworking and crafts. The director notes, *This is a great messy room where children can do painting and crafts without any concern for spilling.* (We observed a delightful all-male sponge painting session in this room with the men teacher-counselors as excited about the possibilities as the boys because it was the first time they had ever tried it!)

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Transportation

Mobility is essential to a program such as that at Chevron. The children attend many different schools spread out in several communities. Little of the outdoor activity takes place on the grounds, which extend only 50 feet or so to the rear of the kindergarten/extended day building for an archery range. Most occurs in other areas of the community -- on the water, where sailing lessons are given, in the park nearby or in one of the many public recreational facilities available in the community -- beaches, parks, mountain camping areas 1/. Because of a complex schedule which accommodates 50 children from the first through sixth grade (unlike other centers, 50% are above the third grade level) as well as sixteen kindergarteners in the winter session and as many as 200 day campers in the summer, an elaborate busing system has been developed 2/. Experience has taught the director how to manage his vast transportation network so that it will not be a fiscal albatross.

In the winter transportation to and from school is offered. During the school year the buses also are used to provide transportation for other schools. Buses were formerly rented for the summer, at a cost of $100.00 a day; the vehicles now receive full use 52 weeks a year, making the system financially feasible.

One of the major headaches is scheduling -- *getting everybody to be in the right place at the right time*. More and more, travel is being limited at Chevron, particularly this past summer because of driving hazards and gasoline costs and shortages.

Because Chevron picks up children at home and later at school and drops them off at the center it falls under the authority of the California Highway Patrol and must conform to all rules governing operators of school buses, including regular inspections and Class 2 licenses for the drivers, who must be at least 18 years of age and must have the license as well as special training before they begin work 3/.

The buses meet at the park near the center in the morning and drop off the first group of children, then go back to other schools to pick up others. (They transport children from a number of public and private schools in the area which are on different schedules) 4/. The director commented that without maximum use of buses -- including their use by other schools -- he could not afford to operate such a fleet.

Leadership

To be able to attract clientele and run a program such as that at Chevron apparently demands a certain degree of charisma and a considerable amount of business acumen on the part of the owner/director. Mr. K is youthful, physically attractive and quickly conveys a sense of competence; he seems to have imparted this sense of purpose and excellence to all of the staff. He has a degree in business administration and a background of courses in early childhood education as well as experience working in educational programs all the way through high school and college. The interviewer notes:

1/ The nearby park, for all practical purposes, is unused except by the center. Built by the city with oil depletion allowance money for $80,000. It has a lovely lagoon with ducks, large grassy areas, huge sandy areas with play equipment, nice clean rest-rooms and drinking fountains. Such city recreation facilities are extremely valuable resources for school age care; without them and the cooperation of city officials many programs could not exist.

2/ The summer schedule is a dizzying array of activities including, on a typical day, dancing, archery, crafts, sailing, swimming and water ballet; on another, bowling, tumbling, volley ball, jump rope and track meet, and yet another, nature hike, cook-out, group games, song-fest, baseball and croquet. Children are assigned to activities according to age, sex, individual interests, and what the professional staff thinks will benefit the child.

3/ Regulations concerning the operation of school buses are stringent and rigidly enforced, the director notes. By having applicants for counselor jobs get the license and training before they come to him, he saves valuable time and money.

4/ At semester beginning and end, each school sets its own opening and closing hours, a nightmare for the schedule-maker.

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All staff are clear and authoritative, able to make the system very clear for me and I'm sure for the children too. The director appears to have an unusual clarity about his goals and how to achieve them 5/. He provides, along with his counselors, mostly male, a model of masculine competence fo the children, 80% of whom are boys. He clearly wants children to learn skills and in this sense has one of the most carefully spelled out programs for meeting the needs of school age boys, especially, that I have seen. He wants each child to leave the program with a clear idea of what he has learned. Like "I have learned to swim and I have learned the following things -- I have learned how to play baseball, and how to do such and such a craft."

The program at Chevron meets some special needs of children and thus, indirectly, those of parents. Many of the boys are enrolled in the program because they are not good at sports and this is a very good place for them to learn basic skills. Mr. K. points out that they start from the very beginning so that no matter how inept a boy is, he does not feel that things are hopeless. Mr. K., as well as the staff, seems quite sensitive to the needs of different children, and our interviewer notes: *I think I would trust him to handle children wisely.* One child with behavior problems was placed at Chevron after the parents were counselled by outside professional sources to remove him from the school he attended; he is now responding well and learning some coping skills. There are some atypical children in the program, several hyperactive children on medication as well as those who are allergic and/or asthmatic. Retarded and emotionally disturbed children are accepted if they can fit into the program "without being scapegoated" 6/. The same limits are imposed on all children by staff so that children with behavioral problems are never permitted to do things forbidden to the others.

Staffing

If Mr. K. has difficulties in getting things to run smoothly, they are not apparent. Finding competent, qualified staff appears to be no problem. In the winter there are six teacher-counselors in extended day; in the summer there are 22 to 30, mostly college students or teachers on vacation. We suspect that young people especially are attracted to working in the area, a beach community with no smog. The fact that nearly all activities take place outdoors, some in locations like one of the elegant marinas along the coast, is a powerful drawing card. Even the problem of getting a Class 2 license and training before being hired does not seem to deter the eager applicants. Mr. K. had a list of over 100 job-seekers from whom to choose this past summer.

Services Offered

Obviously, accessibility to such a program is limited to those parents who can qualify for it economically -- a means test in reverse of that used by the Children's Centers 7/. While most of the children come from stable, comparatively well-to-do homes, this is also an area in transition, where the number of one-parent families is steadily growing with the rapid increase in apartments and decline in single-dwelling buildings. (The near-by marina apartments, Mr. K. notes, have brought in many one-parent families, which now account for perhaps 30% of Chevron's clientele.

Beyond cost, accessibility of services is high; there is no waiting list -- a flexible number of children can be accommodated in the kind of mobile setting Chevron employs. Parents also have the option of making arrangements for fewer than five days a week. The buses making living and going to school within a five-to-eight mile radius possible. (For a growing number of parents, transportation apparently is a consideration. It ranks close in order of importance to program content and type of supervision in questions asked by parents). As for services to parents, the center is open from 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Meals are up to the parents to provide although an afternoon snack is prepared in the kitchen. There are no health or counseling services provided,

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5/ Observing the summer program, we marvelled at the fact that Mr. K. dispatched 140 boys and girls arriving on 10 different buses to half a dozen different locations in the community, within the space of 15 minutes, with no mix-ups, no fights, everybody smiling and happy.

6/ The parents of one boy were asked to remove him because he instigated other children's bullying by his "obnoxious" behavior. *The parents were not seeking help and the program didn't appear to help the child; the situation was only bringing out undesirable behavior in the other children.*

7/ Program cost for services provided is carefully spelled out on the application form and includes fee schedules for both 2:00 and 3:00 pick-up time. Top cost is for 2:00 p.m. pick-up five days a week ($56.00 monthly). Below that, fees range downward from five-day 3:00 p.m. pick-up ($50.00) to two days a week, 3:00 p.m. pick-up, for $24.00 . Summer camp is divided into five-week sessions with options of five, three or two days. Weekly cost is $80.00 to $175.00 per session.

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although the center has its doctor on whom it may call with the approval of the parent (a release form is included in the application). Ill children are seldom kept at the center; frequently they are taken home by the center bus.

Chevron does not attempt to build a parent program or solicit involvement with schools. They try to maintain good contacts with the schools, particularly with teachers, having found that personal contact with teachers makes their own work with children, especially those with behavior problems, much more effective. Contact with parents tends to be somewhat limited except for occasional parent talks with group leaders and an end-of-the-year party.

Licensing

Licensing of such a program apparently has been a real enigma to the Department of Social Welfare, which is responsible for supervising all proprietary child care programs in the state. Obviously they have not had guidelines in the past for dealing with group school age care. The director notes:

> *They don't know what to do with older children, or how to figure space when it is divided between school age and nursery school. For example, in the kindergarten area they are having problems trying to decide whether or not they should set a limit as to the number enrolled and if so how they should figure it. I find it surprising that they permit 30 square feet for school age children and require 35 feet for preschool. I cannot comprehend the logic; clearly, bigger children need more space.*

Chevron has experienced the usual high turnover in licensing workers, although Mr K. confides that they seldom see theirs. Apparently the same phenomenon occurs in school age as in preschool licensing, namely, that partly because of work load, once the department identifies a program as being competently run, it turns its attention to others in greater need of supervision. Mr. K. is quick to voice his appreciation for the autonomy given directors such as himself, but clearly feels more realistic guidelines would be beneficial to resolving some of the questions concerning school age care.

Getting It All Together

Chevron shares one limitation with nearly all other school age programs -- space. Directors never, it appears, feel completely comfortable with the amount of space available to them. Mr. K. knows enough about good business principles to avoid expansion that could not pay off. Were it not for a mild climate and an expensive transportation network this program could not function. But it does, and very well indeed, due primarily to efficient organizational management and the clear understanding of children's needs in some very specific areas.

The program is unique in the provisions it makes for teaching a broad range of athletic skills, in a social group situation where children receive a great deal of ego support and have great fun to boot. Noting that boys in particular often feel inferior when they lack physical skills, Mr. K. emphasizes that care is taken by staff to see that no child is embarrassed. Like other directors who are sensitive to the needs of school age children, he pleads for greater recognition of this group: *They need to feel they have a special place to go to, not that they are just being sent some place.*

Western Avenue Sports Club: A Dream That is Becoming a Nightmare

Western Avenue Sports Club is located in an older suburban neighborhood, "older" meaning that it burgeoned in the 1940's rather than in the 1960's. It was here, twenty-seven years ago, that Mr. B., a private school coach just out of the Army, began an after-school and week-end group when friends asked if he would take care of their children. The need was created by the sudden swelling of the female work force in Southern California during World War II. After the B's marriage, they both gave up their jobs, he as coach, she as secretary, to devote their energies to caring for children full time, so great was the demand. They decided against preschool in favor of a school age program when they saw the growing need for such services in the area. Over the years they have coped with various problems by trial and error:

> *We knew nothing in the beginning about licensing or insurance. Finding property was difficult. We had grandiose ideas; we wanted a big gym, a pool, a craft room. We had to settle*

for a dinky little place that had only a small house, a grape arbor, a hole for a pool 8/.

But if physical amenities were lacking, customers were not: *We had lots of visitors, referred by satisfied parents.* Forty children were enrolled the first summer.

The property on which they opened their first center in 1952 grew with the enrollment. Three years later another piece of property across the street was added to the original land, and the center boasted a pool which Mrs. B's father helped to construct. There were plans to add a nursery school, but these died after a three year struggle with regulations for a hot lunch which would have required a separate and costly kitchen. In retrospect, however, thinking of the increasing problems they have encountered with transportation and building regulations the B's wish they had opted for a nursery school after all. The property today provides an ideal setting for outdoor activities. Our interviewer observes:

> *The Western Avenue Sports Club is located at the end of a dead-end street and is housed on what must be about four lots, two on one side of the quiet street and two on the other. On one side is a small building with an area outside which has games painted on it, and a large patio area; behind this is a beautifully large grassy lawn with shade trees. The facility across the street is equally pleasant. There is a swimming pool, and by the pool is a large covered patio which has a ping-pong table, a pool table, a shuffle board game, benches and tables. To the back and to the side is a large wood-working area with plenty of vises and saws and lots of wood piled up. Behind is another large lawn with trees, a house to the rear, once destined for the children's activities and now used for an office, and another large shaded patio with tables. The B's live in a small house at the front of the property. The site is well-maintained; everything is freshly painted and clean and it is a pleasant spot to be in.*

Clientele

Approximately 50 children are enrolled at Western Avenue Sports Club 9/ -- the same number as in the extended day program at Chevron -- but they come from a broader socio-economic spectrum. Some have parents in professional occupations, a few come from families who receive welfare supplements, with a scattering in between of mothers who are office workers, and more than half have sole parents. When they apply for enrollment, parents ask anxiously about transportation and costs. Mrs. B. comments that working parents tend to be more pragmatic by necessity, and ask for less information about program content than non-working mothers who have more time on their hands, check out the center more carefully and come to visit more frequently. The B's make certain that parents understand policies about paying for time when the child is absent.

The Licensing Division of the State Department of Social Services 10/ had asked proprietary centers to require a medical examination but, as Mrs. B. points out, *That's unrealistic; the school checks on this and it's too hard on parents. We let it slide.* Fees are comparable to those of Chevron, running from $13.50 a week including transportation ($10.00 a week without transportation) for the third through sixth grades, to $21.00 a week for kindergarteners (these children are at the center from 7:00 a.m. to [illegible]00 a.m., when they are taken to school in one of the club buses. then from 11:30 a.m. until 6:00 p.m.).

Until this year the center has always had afternoon kindergarteners, but a change of public school schedules -- one of the problems with which extended day programs must contend -- means that there are none presently. This leaves the facility empty during the morning hours. Any change in school schedule complicates the already complex problem of busing of children. The center must deploy its staff and its four twelve-passenger buses in a manner which will get them to the fifteen different schools which the children attend in time to pick up all the first graders by 1:10 p.m.

8/ Originally they had considered buying a piece of land next to a school but were advised against it as being too risky because the property would need a zoning variance, from multiple dwelling residential to commercial, the required zoning for day care.

9/ Western Avenue Sports Club is licensed for 160 children. At the time we visited, enrollment was down for a number of reasons. Pressing business matters have forced the B's to devote less time to advertising and recruiting. The economic recession has taken its toll, as well as the appearance of other day care services in the area, one of them a center which serves low income families. The child population itself may have decreased in this area, which was originally settled by young families whose children are now adolescents.

10/ As of 1973 licensing was moved to the State Department of Health and is now entitled the Facilities Licensing and Certification Section.

and then make several more trips (for a total of six) to collect the second through sixth graders by 3:00 p.m.

Transportation Again

It is the transportation problem which has become a major migraine for the B's. We talked at length with Mrs. B., an attractive, enthusiastic, articulate lady whose cheerful manner gave us the impression that it would take a great deal to get her down. As she spoke we realized why she and her husband were thinking of retreating to a less pressured occupation. The headaches apparently begin with the licensing of drivers. Mrs. B. points out that it is nearly impossible to find men between the ages of 18 and 24 (due to recent accidents, insurance regulations now have pushed the lower age limit to 21) who can afford the time and expense of becoming licensed before they know whether they will have the job or not, and the B's cannot absorb the expense themselves 11/. They presently have two male counselor/bus drivers besides Mrs. B. and the club secretary who do the driving in addition to their other duties. Besides these four, staff is comprised of two additional middle-aged women and Mr. B. who tends to the business affairs and maintenance of the buses. (Because they pick up and deliver children to other schools, the club is required to have yellow school buses and regular inspections. Previously they had an extra bus for emergencies but tightening of insurance and California Highway Patrol (CHP) regulations apparently now makes this practice economically impossible). *Transportation of children is the key to our whole thing*, Mrs. B. points out; granting that regulations are necessary, she laments what appear to be the more petty bureaucratic restrictions, such as the limiting of driver testing to a specific geographic zone, for one hour and a half one day a week. These regulations piled on top of skyrocketing costs of insurance and operating expenses have apparently become the last straw.

Licensing Again

Not only must Western Avenue Sports Club meet requirements of the Department of Motor Vehicles and the CHP but also state and city Departments of Health, the city Department of Building and Safety and the fire marshal. Licensing and inspection is a confused and contradictory game which would have taxed even Lewis Carroll's imagination. *We have been in business 27 years*, remarks Mrs. B., *and until just recently there was no category for extended day care.* For the purposes of fire inspection she noted, there appear to be three categories of institutions: schools, day nurseries, and places of assemblage:

> *The Fire Department didn't know where to put us. If they classified us as a school, we would have had to have a sprinkler and automatic fire alarm system. We couldn't afford that (and besides the children are seldom indoors; access to the outside is immediate, the groups are small) so they put us in 'places of assemblage'!*

Mrs. B's recitation of their problems with the city building department when they tried to bring a small house on pa rt of the property up to code is reminiscent of the Queen's Croquet Game 12/, the only difference being that, instead of no rules in particular, there seem to be an over-abundance. The B's spent $2000.00 on the house, changing exits and partitions, and the facility was approved. A turnover in licensing inspectors brought a new official who rescinded the order:

11/ The licensing process for bus drivers is a complex and costly procedure involving 1) a physical examination (this means an outlay of $15.00 - $20.00); 2) studying the commercial supplement to the Department Motor Vehicles regulations manual; 3) going to the local office of the California HIghway Patrol: *The test can be taken only in our zone in the Club's bus on Wednesdays, only between 8:00 a.,. and 9:30 a.m. This is the written test. If the applicant fails he has to wait until the following Wednesday -- a whole week gone.* The test itself, comprised of 88 questions on school bus rules, is, according to Mrs. B., a very difficult one: *The questions are very ambiguous; you can know the whole thing and still flunk it;* 4) Taking the driving test. *They've tightened up the regulations -- you have to do a whole bus check in sequence -- if you forget to lift the hood the first thing, you're through;* 5) Taking, within 120 days after the license is granted, a 20 to 40 hour course (sponsored Mrs. B. thinks, by the Board of Education) for drivers of school buses.

12/ *Alice soon came to the conclusion that it was a very difficult game indeed.* (Lewis, Carroll, Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, New York: Heritage Press, 1941.

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He argued that there must be full toileting facilities, separate for boys and girls, in a ratio of one toilet for every ten children enrolled. They must think the kids spend all day on the pot! Outdoors, we were required to put in 30 cement footings for small posts holding up a lightweight metal canopy (another Fire Department regulation) covering the patio near the pool. A contractor said they were strong enough to support a one-story building.

As a result of the restrictions, the B's have been limited in developing the property, which is spacious and has almost unlimited potential for providing a wide range of activities for children. As it is, it has a large pool and dressing rooms, an area for wood working 13/, large expanses of grass and hard-surface areas, many lovely old trees. Curiously, the center was licensed for 160 children, although the indoor facilities could never support this large a group without additional housing. The B's have tried to get the additional indoor space approved and have apparently all but given up:

Licensing gets harder and harder to surmount; as you get older it's harder to fight it. Some of the regulations are necessary, of course, but some seem so ridiculous, and owners of private centers just can't afford it any more.

It would be unfortunate to allow a facility such as Western Avenue Sports Club to fade from the day care picture, because the need for such a service is as great as ever. Mrs. B. points out that she sometimes receives as many as four calls a day asking for care, but they cannot fit any more schools into their busing schedule. Enrollment needs to be increased, but can only be done by recruiting children from schools served by their buses.

Program and Services

The B's are sensitive to the needs of working mothers and low income families: *We love to have the children come because they need the experiences and a second home where they can be happy and comfortable.* Activities are free choice with swimming always available in good weather; in summer there are groupings according to sex and age, 5 - 6 year olds in one group, 7 - 8 and 9 - 12 in the others. During the school year, however, there is no grouping.

For years we tried to keep them separated, doing what their group was doing. Now we announce three or four activities at snack time; crafts, soft ball for boys eight and over, play in the 'little yard' (a small yard with kindergarten age equipment for the five to seven year olds), musical boxes outside, clean-up, etc.

The stellar attraction of course is the pool. The observer comments:

On one very unseasonably warm day the action was a little slow and the boredom beginning to create behavior problems when swim-time was announced for those who wanted it. A line immediately formed, the children walked across the street with the coach, and within minutes nearly two dozen happy and apparently very competent swimmers, most from age 8 - 12, were practicing their diving skills. The presence of men in the program is particularly beneficial for the many boys who need a big-brother or father figure with whom to identify.

If children are only mildly ill or very tired they can stay at the center if the parent requests it: *If they're sick we isolate them and don't allow them to go out to play.* There are no counseling or health services provided, although Mrs. B., who can relate to parents as a warm and concerned friend, would love to be able to. She reports success with some mothers who need some advice on parenting: *Sometimes I suggest less strictness.*

One of the problems with which staff must frequently deal relates to the fact that many children have been in the program since kindergarten and are getting bored with the same environment. With increasingly heavy traffic, the danger of accidents, parents' concern for safety, and the expense and inconvenience, trips around the community, to the beaches, etc., have been limited 14/. The old bugaboo of school age staff, having to think up creative things to do, is present here as elsewhere. A staff member observed that they had tried the weekly-theme strategy last year, and

13/ Wood is becoming more expensive and hard to get, thus limiting this important and popular activity.

14/ Apparently one of the problems with taking trips is parents' negative attitudes. Frequently they don't seem to want the children to go away from the center because of concerns for their safety, expense (where an extra fee must be collected), and wanting to know exactly where they are. Besides, trips may mean that a child is not available for pick-up if parents get off work early.

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that it worked pretty well, but it took a lot of time and was a lot of work: *This year there simply has not been the necessary time to plan for it* 15/. There seems to be an awareness on the part of at least some of the staff that the children there really have had no choice in whether they come or not and that they ought to have a choice about what they do while they are there. Mrs. B's assistant commented:

> *I used to be a strict disciplinarian; if I saw anyone fooling around, I ordered him out of the activity -- I couldn't stand stragglers. Now I recognize that there's nothing wrong with boys sitting and talking at the end of the yard, 'doing nothing'. Sometimes they need to get away from it all. I know that I had a lot more freedom in my childhood than these children have.*

In summer the action tends to become more interesting, partly due to the influx of younger staff members who bring with them commitment, energy and innovative ideas. In addition, a program which depends heavily on physical activities needs all the help it can get from the climate. Besides less good weather, winter also means school homework, which the center emphasizes as a help to parents as well as children: *We could improve on this if we had high school students to work with them.*

Mrs. B. states that one of the biggest limitations in achieving program goals is finding competent, warm staff. Geographical location undoubtedly plays a part. Chevron has the advantage over Western Avenue Sports Club of being in a beach community, attractive to young college students and teachers and to the athletic types upon which a sports-oriented program depends. Part of the secret no doubt lies in maintaining a staff which knows how to cope with children who have everything but what they really need. Some of the children at Western Avenue Sports Club, Mrs. B. pointed out, come from fairly well-to-do families where they are both neglected and indulged, where a surfeit of material things in the absence of the right kind and amount of parental attention means that the children are unappreciative and have little in the way of a value system. Expert scheduling, provision of a large variety of challenging activities in a number of different settings, and a staff which is very clear about giving support as well as setting limits and which is very actively involved with the children seem essential to keep children from being bored and to avert behavior problems.

The problems which confront Western Avenue Sports Club seem to be representative of those facing school age care in general and proprietary programs in particular. The pressures from an inflated economy and a proliferation of agency regulations, which seem to be uncoordinated, unrealistic and unevenly enforced, are becoming unmanageable:

> *Private enterprise is being squeezed out, insurance and taxes are rising higher and higher; you can't charge what you need to because people can't pay. Government subsidy may be the only answer, but that probably means control.*
>
> *Doing it, working it out yourself, is such fun -- at least it used to be* 16/.

Why does Chevron seem to be thriving, and Western Avenue Sports Club weakening in its fight for survival? Part of the answer may lie in Mrs. B's appraisal: *The older you get, the harder it is. . .* Youth and vigor not only provide energy to meet the succession of crises but attract a staff with the same qualities. Dealing with the mechanical complexities of school age care, e. g., licensing, improving physical facilities, scheduling transportation to meet changes in school schedules, insurance costs, etc., clearly demands a great deal of stamina as well as business skills and just plain old moxie. Knowing how to win without actually cheating, who to take your case to, when and where, how to get necessary support, in which aspect of programming to invest energy and financial resources (Mr. K. at Chevron has chosen transportation) are all important.

Beyond that, however, inhibitory rules which prevent competent owner/directors from developing services can only do damage. Even the most vigorous, enthusiastic individual cannot provide good care when he or she is being strangled by bureaucratic red tape. Western Avenue Sports Club has a physical plant which is rich in potential. The area is still pleasant, the center free from noise and traffic, the available space is considerable. Hopefully, it can survive the economic and regulatory pressures it is undergoing.

15/ Private programs tend to feel the staff squeeze more strongly than public ones. They have less ready access to personnel, less money for salaries, and do not have the opportunity to use such additional help as Neighborhood Youth Corps workers or volunteers.

16/ Some of the fun might be put back in it, Mrs. B. thinks, by state or federally funded scholarships. For example, perhaps $15.00 of the $27.50 fee for one child, five days a week, in the summer program could be provided.

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Few proprietary centers serve only school age children. Several of those on our original list had succumbed to the pressures which Mrs. B. describes. Few profit-making organizations can afford the high overhead from facilities standing empty during school hours or buses which are not filled to capacity. There seems to be little incentive for proprietary centers to offer care for school age children beyond the kindergarten year.

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CHAPTER IX

PROPRIETARY CENTERS: SCHOOL AGE PROGRAMS IN THE BLACK COMMUNITY

We were impressed by the number of facilities in our sample which were meeting some special needs of parents and children in the black community. In this community there is a sizeable number of black families, both one- and two-parent, who have achieved some measure of socio-economic success and who are looking for child care services which will provide both physical protection and educational experiences for their children. Statistics indicate a high percentage of maternal employment in such families, greater in its proportion of working mothers than in white families at comparable income levels. In her study of child care arrangements of working mothers, Ruderman (1968) notes this phenomenon in citing statistics for white and Negro maternal rates of employment. It was found in a day care study undertaken by the Child Welfare League of America in 1960 that Negro mothers have a significantly higher rate of employment than have white mothers, 38% compared with 25%. In contrast to white mothers, Negro mothers' rate of employment is higher on higher income and SES levels than on lower ones (Ruderman, 1968, pp 129,130).

In attempting to explain this phenomenon, Ruderman points out that factors other than economic ones, such as domestic traditions and marital patterns, may play an important role in determining maternal employment. While the white mother on higher SES levels may seek to meet her family's needs and her own social needs by being at home, having less need for work as an avenue to mobility and as a personal outlet, the higher SES Negro mother may work for those very reasons.

Whatever the reason, high maternal rates of employment in the black community, particularly on higher SES levels, determine a real need for day care facilities, specifically those which offer the things which are of special importance to black mothers. Ruderman (1968) found in her study that black working mothers are especially attracted to good child care centers which offer *training, opportunities to learn, to prepare for school, to acquire social and educational skills:*

> *On all SES levels, Negro mothers see a good child care center as an avenue to acculturation and a way out of haphazard and possibly dangerous 'informal' arrangements . . . Negro families, even of high SES, often live in poor or marginal neighborhoods, and the Negro mother may feel some anxiety about her children while she is at work. Even if she is not worried about the arrangement in itself, she may worry about the neighbors, the playmates, etc. (Ruderman, 1968, p 325).*

The data from Ruderman's study make a strong case for good center care in the black community. Her statistics indicate that:

- -black children are more often placed in out-of-home care, frequently with neighbors, friends, etc.
- -black mothers are more often dissatisfied with these informal arrangements
- -they tend to feel more anxiety about their children's welfare
- -they more often stress the social and intellectual benefits of the centers.

In our sample we have found a number of centers which seem to have grown up in response to this demand from an increasingly mobile -- geographically as well as socio-economically -- segment of the black community. We have chosen, as an illustration of such a facility, one which is particularly effective in meeting some of these special needs. As a social club, it provides opportunity for development of social and intellectual skills in an extended family environment, as well as more than adequate supervision. Most important perhaps, it offers the children an authoritative yet warm father figure, a male director who is totally involved with the children, whose charisma clearly attracts parents and children and who instills within them a strong sense of trust.

In addition we will briefly describe several other centers which are somewhat more typical, perhaps, of center care in the black community. Each of these centers has a highly individualized name. We gave up on renaming these centers -- our substitutes were such poor imitations of the original names. Finally we settled for using the director's initials.

Mr. T's Club: Answer to a Black Parent's Prayer

The neighborhood in which Mr. T's Club is located is an inner city area, not far removed from the urban core, which has undergone the now-familiar transition from white to black; it

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was once inhabited by a relatively affluent white, and predominantly Jewish, population. However, unlike those neighborhoods which have experienced the tipping mechanism and become predominantly black, poverty-ridden and run-down, this particular area has, by its open-housing patterns and a combination of socio-economic factors and positive attitudes towards integration, retained an ethnic mixture and attracted black residents of moderate to high socio-economic levels. It also succeeded in retaining some of its old physical charm and grace in the houses, in spite of seedy-looking businesses, empty store-fronts and the ghetto which lies to the East. It is to this neighborhood that many upwardly mobile black families come in their search for a better life. The Club itself is housed in an exceedingly tidy, well-cared for though small building, originally a house, then a YMCA until its purchase by Mr. T, the owner and director, in 1970. The neatly-kept grass and flowers in the front, the hard-surface playground at the side and the swimming pool to the rear are surrounded by a high cyclone fence.

Our interviewer notes of Mr. T., a tall, handsome, well-built man with graying hair and sideburns: *He has an absolutely elegant manner about him that would command any child's respect.* The grace with which he swings his large but trim frame out of one of the three VW buses he uses to transport children hints at his background as a heavy-equipment operator for 20 years, but nothing in his behavior suggests a hard-hat life-style. He discovered early childhood education classes in a university catalogue one day, told his wife, *You'll think I'm crazy but I'm going to take one of these classes to see what makes little ones tick,* and ended up taking four. He got a job working for a child care corporation; after 20 minutes in the preschool program, he realized he had found his life's work.

Soon dissatisfied with the practices of the center in which he worked, he left, and when a number of parents approached him about beginning his own center, he decided to try it. Had he known ahead of time, he comments, how much money it would cost to become established, he probably wouldn't have done it, but he was determined to see it through. The first day he had six children; by the end of the week, 12, and by the end of the second, was full to capacity; he then began a waiting list which he has had ever since 1/. Forty-two children are presently enrolled, six kindergarteners, 18 first and second graders and 18 third through sixth graders, in a program which provides a wide variety of experiences both at the Club (swimming, basketball, sewing, crafts, putting on plays) and out in the community (field trips anywhere within 125 miles, cook-outs, nature study) 2/. The children do everything in a group, with Mr. R. as the surrogate father: *They want me to go everywhere with them -- to open house and plays at school, to recitals.*

The unusual climate at Mr. R's Club is noticeable the moment a visitor walks in the door. There is no bickering, no jostling, no fighting or aggressive behavior of any kind. The large number of older boys in the Club makes this phenomenon even more pronounced. We realized after observing the activities and talking with Mr. T. that it stems in large part from his expectations for the children, the respect he shows them and the support he gives them. A sign in his office proclaims: *Children are not miniature adults.* He said that at times he wasn't sure he really believed that, because he felt very strongly that if you treat children as intelligent and sensible people and you always make clear to them what you expect and why it's important, you'll have no trouble and everyone will cooperate:

> *Mr. T. said, for example, everyone knows that when you get on the bus the first thing you do is speak to everyone and say 'good morning' and then fasten your seat-belt. When they have a new child, he never has to explain the procedure because all the other children will explain how it's done.*

When they go to an afternoon matinee in the summer, there are sometimes children from other centers there who are being silly and acting up. His children say to him, *What's wrong with them? Don't they know what to do?* He points out he never has a problem with behavior in the Club. Our observer notes: *I could easily believe it. He is the kind of adult no children would ever be caught acting silly with.* In one instance, while the children were lining up outside the center to go in for snack -- a familiar treat purchased at a local drive-in on the bus ride from school back to the center -- the boys were allowed to precede the girls, who had been doing some chattering. In some black centers, the girls would have been given automatic precedence over the boys; here, the boys are not treated as second-class citizens. They display a quiet pride, self-confidence and respect for others which is immediately apparent, and clearly the result of the model

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1/ Mr. T. would like to buy the lot next door and expand up to 75 children, but he doesn't want a program that's too large because then he wouldn't know the children: *I never want to look at the back of a child's head and not know who it is.*

2/ Mr. T. notes: *I try to take the children where the parents don't go: at least 20 of them have never seen snow.*

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Mr. T. provides for them. His style is not authoritarian, but authoritative; the children hold hands with him affectionately and he enters all their activities, but they know precisely where the limits are set.

The Trusted Child-Advocate: Parent Involvement at T's

Parents share the children's feelings of trust and lean on Mr. T. for many things, such as registering their children in school, which some find difficult to fit into a working schedule. He wonders sometimes about his relationship with the children and parents, questioning whether he takes over too much of the parental role. He is, like so many teachers and directors in school age care, a go-between with the school, helping to resolve conflicts. Often he reads the unsealed notes children bring home from school, and talks with the children about them on the bus while the incidents are still fresh in the child 's mind. Although he feels it is the parents' role to deal with these problems, the timing seems right for him to help, and it seems obvious this is an area of support on which the parents rely. He keeps very close track of each child. For example, one little girl appeared to be developing a skin problem and he recommended that the parents check with a dermatologist for allergies, which they did. Of the parents, he points out:

> *They are really conscientious but many times they don't really look at their children. Many times, I've had to give them a little nudge or remind them they need to do something.*

Parents evidently will take this from Mr. T. because they know he really cares about their children.

Mr. T. says his ultimate goal is to have a place to which children really want to come, and it would appear he has achieved it. He points out: *I'll do anything if it will enrich their lives, I'll go anywhere within reason if I can live with the schedule.*

Such a philosophy obviously entails some hard pragmatic choices, one of which has been to invest energy and money in developing a good transportation system, as Mr. K. has done at Chevron. He owns three new-looking and immaculate VW buses which he himself drives with help from staff and which are subject to the regular California Highway Patrol inspection. He has thorough insurance coverage, costing between $1300 and $1500 yearly, which he points out is more complete than that carried by most centers. He comments:

> *Even if this kind of coverage costs more, I feel it's very important. You could be wiped out by a bad accident, and you'd feel bad about what had happened for the parents' and children's sake.*

Mr. T. cannot understand how the Licensing Department of Social Welfare can be so particular about things which don't seem to be very important and not ask any questions at all about transportation, which he feels can be a really hazardous thing. He is always careful to keep medical permission slips, signed by the parent, in the bus at all times: *If we had an accident forty miles away from the center where would I be if a child needed medical attention and the permission slip was not in the bus 3/?* It is this kind of precaution that obviously makes parents so comfortable.

The satisfaction Mr. T. gets from the club has to be the contribution he makes to parents' and children's good feelings; it cannot be the money (he charges $18.00 a week including the transportation which in turn includes home pick-up and sometimes delivery). Mr. T. clearly loves his job and all forty-two children, each one of whom he talks about as if he or she were his own child. Staffing is a problem for him; he has little difficulty finding teachers but cannot always get what he wants. Like Mrs. C. at Surf Blvd., he notes:

> *Most younger teachers are liked by the children and have a lot of ideas for activities, but they are less mature and dependable than older ones about being where they are supposed to be when they are supposed to be there.*

The program is highly flexible and apparently relies heavily on the extended environment, made possible by the fleet of buses, for diversity of activities. A mimeographed schedule for Easter vacation indicates special attractions, one for each day of the week· swimming, arts and crafts, nature study at the beach, Callahan's Old West Village, and a cook-out and Easter Egg hunt. This active schedule is balanced by very relaxed in-between times. For example,

> *T's seemed to me to be refreshingly out-front about the early morning being a transition. It's as though by recognizing the inherent nature of this period they contain it in a kind of*

3/ Frequently they go as many as 125 miles away from the center on field trips.

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warmth and stability. There's no pressure on children to stay seated at an activity. Mr. T. says, 'Depriving children of movement is like incarcerating adults', and there's lots of warm conversation in homogeneous little groups. A sort of intimacy is evident which gives the early morning its own special value.

The program at T's offers the parents who make up its clientele most of the things parents in the black community seek -- a safe protected environment 4/, social and intellectual skills, and consistent discipline from a caring adult. Their children are being prepared to make it in the larger community, if they so choose. The boys are not forced to resort to aggressive behavior to assert their masculinity and the girls are given a chance to feel feminine.

There is not a great deal in the way of equipment (Mr. T. acknowledges, *There really is not much to do here*) but the children have become exceedingly adept at developing their own organized games. To watch the older boys playing basketball is like watching a junior training camp for the Los Angeles Lakers; even the younger ones display an assured competence as they organize a game of dodgeball among themselves.

The glue that holds it all together obviously is Mr. T. Without him it is hard to imagine the Club at all. As the parents point out to him, *The kids want to come because I'm here* 5/. Many of the children have been there for a number of years and would be bored if it weren't for the pleasure they get from being with Mr. T. Notes our observer:

That sums it up. I think this would not be such a good program for a child who doesn't like children in a group or who always loses in competition. For one who does like groups, who is reasonably sturdy and independent, it offers warmth, consistent discipline, a relaxed schedule, reasonable stimulation, continuity and a beautiful father figure.

Mrs. A's: *We Care For Your Child*

Parents in the black community appear to be especially hungry for day care services which will offset negative effects of the public schools, as well as the dangers of urban living. They are willing to pay a fairly high premium -- from $17.00 to $21.00 a week -- for centers which can provide individual attention and learning experiences.

Mrs. A., the director at the center, located in the same general area as Mr. T's Club, was eloquent about the failure of the schools in the black community to meet the needs of the children: *If only the schoolrooms weren't so crowded and interest were really shown in the kids. There's so little supervision; the children do unheard-of-things. I'm surprised there aren't more accidents.* She feels a strong responsibility for the children who come to the center; her statement that *We love the kids and feel concerned about them* expresses the attitude which parents are apparently looking for. Our interviewer comments:

I have a hunch that the strong point in this center is the need Mrs. A. has to keep both parents and children happy. She is a warm and delightful person and I found my interview with her really enjoyable. She talks with great warmth about the children, and I believe her when she says she has good rapport with the parents, whom she describes as very concerned about the children and very cooperative. They evidently talk to her quite a bit about the child's school progress and she seems to have made good contact with the seven elementary schools to which she buses children.

Mrs. A.,like many directors, acts as advocate for the child in her contacts with school personnel, who tend to have little patience or understanding of young miscreants, often because they have little background knowledge of the child and because they must deal with so many children. Frequently a child who is a behavior problem at school causes no trouble in the center. Like Mr. T., Mrs. A., the observer comments, is warm and loving but not the kind of adult that a child would misbehave with:

Not because she is stern and strict but because, I am sure, she is crystal clear about what she wants and it would simply not occur to the child that what she wants is unreasonable. She struck me as an interesting combination of authority and warmth. Throughout the interview she spoke a number of times about the differences between children and, as she said, 'each is a little individual'. I'm sure that she makes each child feel that in his own way he is a special person.

4/ Even in this neighborhood, with its middle-class appearance, gangs from the neighborhood threaten the local children.

5/ *Sometimes*, Mr . T. chuckles, *they forget who I am and call me 'daddy'.*

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Mrs. A. talks with parents not only about the children's behavior problems (frequently related to school) to try and help them, but their own personal and family problems. If it is an unusual or serious problem she refers them to various community agencies.

Again, The Economics of Child Care

The greatest limitations on the program at Mrs. A's, in which 45 children are enrolled, are physical and financial. The center itself is located on a busy commercial street in a former store which had a U-shaped display window surrounding a tiled entrance 6/. Mrs. A. has put sliding iron grill work across the front of the building, thus providing a small play area immediately adjacent to the indoors, as well as security for the building. The former display window is now the director's office, an area about 6' X 20', crammed to the gunwales with paper, supplies for the children and all sorts of odds and ends. There is no kitchen equipped to serve lunches although there is a sink, 2-burner hot plate and refrigerator for snacks, as well as a vending machine which Mrs. A. would like to see stocked with more nutritious things than it contains at present. Those children who eat at the center bring their own lunches from home. The indoor area is roomy but somewhat barren of equipment, carpeted on one half, with linoleum on the other for craft activities and eating. Outdoors, the prospects are more bleak; the play yard is all asphalt, with no grass or trees and comparatively little in the way of equipment. The area is tiny, hemmed in by buildings on either side and an alley in back. No doubt vandalism is a real problem here.

Lack of finances appears to be a real limitation at Mrs. A's. There may be less parental ability to pay than at Mr. T's Club, and it appears that Mrs. A. adjusts the fee according to what the traffic can bear. Generally, however, the charge seems to be $70.00 - $75.00 a month for a first grader who is bussed to and from school. Making ends meet for such a program is not easy, and the staff undoubtedly receive greater psychological than monetary benefits 7/.

Parents are offered a variety of transportation options. The center will pick children up at home in the morning or parents can bring them to the center; children are taken to school and returned to the center by bus, and in the evening either parents pick up children or they are taken home 8/. A good part of the staff's time is devoted to the complicated driving schedule 9/, which is limited primarily to to-and-from school trips in the winter but is greatly expanded in the summer when the heat and small quarters require that much time be spent away from the center, at the beach or nearby parks. Mr. A. is then pressed into service as driver and helps take children to swimming lessons in the park, a part of the city recreation program, as well as serving as coach and referee for the older children's basketball games and the younger ones' keep-away, tether-ball, etc.

Program at Mrs. A's is relaxed and comfortable; children are not pressured to engage in any activity, and free choice is the rule. Rest period exemplifies the type of flexible, adapted-to-fit-individual-needs tempo of the center; as we arrived at 2:20 p.m. one afternoon, some children were sound asleep, others resting quietly while still others sat on the edge of their cots engaging in conversation with each other, some gentle horseplay, or receiving help from the teacher in putting on shoes. No one was pressured to get up as, we assume, no one was forced to sleep; several sleepy-heads continued to doze peacefully, undisturbed, after the others had gotten up to go outdoors for a snack of pretzels and juice. Eventually activities began to evolve -- spontaneous dancing to rock records on the record player, playing with dolls in a cozy private place under the table, an elaborate tea party at another table (with boys included), block building and small car-racing 10/. Because of the financial limitations the center faces, choice is somewhat limited. There was a fair amount of roaming around and problems with taking turns. Our observer comments:

> *I thought the center seemed like a game of musical chairs. Of the interesting things, or of the adult leadership, there was just one chair less than players.*

6/ Few of the private facilities in the black community can afford the luxury of a physical plant designed and built specifically for child care.

7/ Mrs. A. particularly laments the high cost of insurance for transportation of children.

8/ Center hours are from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

9/ Adult/child ratio is roughly 1:12, including time out for driving the busses.

10/ The children were repeatedly cautioned by teachers in a gentle way about treatment of the equipment; much of it could not be taken outside for fear of breakage. We suspect that the children are well aware that they must take good care of the toys and games because they are expensive and hard to come by in this center.

The importance of this type of program, we feel, lies in its caring, in more than one sense of the word. Not only can parents rest assured their children are well-supervised and quite safe physically, but they know they are getting individual attention in a small, relaxed warm environment from staff who are doing their best, with the materials at hand, to make the hours the children spend in the center comfortable and happy. We were impressed at Mrs. A's, as we were at Mr. T's Club, by the respect which teachers showed children and children, in turn, showed one another. An observer comments:

I was rather touched by one boy who accidentally ran his toy car into my foot, lightly bumping it. He immediately said, 'I'm sorry', in the kindest, most caring way. (It reminded me of the boy who, without a word from an adult, went to get me a chair at Mr. T's.) The motto of the school, 'We care for your children' is more, I think, than just a clever play on words; the children do seem to feel cared for and reflect it in their behavior.

Mrs. D's: Emphasis on Education

These were not isolated instances of programs meeting some special needs of black parents and children. Another center also in the same general area, Mrs. D's, emphasizes educational instruction and has a very clear pluralistic philosophy which focuses on the belief that no single view of reality can account for all the phenomena of life. The carefully articulated goals of this center, which is part of a private elementary school, are to provide supervision, stability and security along with as many learning experiences as possible. One of the unique features of the program is that these experiences are not limited to the children; on Saturdays college courses are offered for parents (along with classes for children) in which 30 are enrolled, with credit granted towards a liberal arts degree awarded by International University.

As at Mrs. A's, emphasis is placed on concern with the individual child to counteract the mass-production approach encountered in the public schools. The director, Mrs. D., a young, soft-spoken lady with an engaging way of smiling before she speaks, pointed out:

There are so many individual children, so many different backgrounds teachers must deal with; they should understand the great variety of children they are working with. We (in extended day programs) can see more of the individual child and work with him after school. Our adult/child ratio is 1:10 but we would really like 1:5.

Fifty-five children -- of whom thirty-two attend the private elementary school -- are enrolled in the extended day program 11/. In addition to the regular activities, which include sports, arts and crafts, special classes in karate, ballet and tap dancing, and special tutoring are offered for $5.00 in addition to the regular $17.50 a week fee (which includes transportation). The fact that the extended day care takes place on a school site means that the environment is instruction-oriented. In the building which houses the school age program -- apparently once a store, or group of stores, which gives it an irregular shape as well as a parking-lot playground -- the space is divided into two large areas. In one, a number of insulated units create a series of 'learning centers', all carefully labeled: dramatic play, blocks, science, listening center, cognitive development, reading corner, etc. The areas are neat, well-equipped, inviting. On the opposite side is an asphalt-tiled room containing a number of moveable school desk-chairs, a teacher's desk and blackboard. (Here, one afternoon, the boys played chess -- two of them perched on the teacher's desk, receiving occasional assistance from the male teacher, and other games -- cards, pick-up sticks, etc. At two large craft tables in the kindergarten area the girls made crepe paper flowers dipped in hot wax, for Mothers' Day.) Notes one observer:

This was a lively atmosphere -- everyone seemed busy doing his own thing. Five children who had been napping got their own library books, looked at them together and had a good intellectual discussion about what they were seeing.

I was struck by the friendliness of the staff. They all checked to be sure that people knew I was there, hoped I would be comfortable and even stopped to chat for a moment. I watched a teacher with some of the kindergarteners just waking up from naps -- she was very patient, very gentle and gave them a great deal of autonomy. There was a delightful man teacher, again direct and clear in his authority.

Informal parent contacts are limited because of the busing service. Interaction therefore tends to be on a more formal level, primarily in parent conferences which take place in connection with the regular school program. (Because of the latter, doing homework is part of the activity

11/ The extended day care is an adjunct to the preschool -- housed on another site three blocks away -- and a private school for kindergarten through third grade, as well as a summer day camp.

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schedule.) The fact that there is a complete educational program housed on one site (although the preschool is physically separated by a few blocks) and encompassing preschool, primary and before and after school components makes it a self-contained unit which seems to rely less on outside contacts -- a sort of one-stop learning center for all ages. Probably the greatest strength of the after school care stems from this integrated arrangement which provides an enriched educational environment on a small scale with individual attention. (With the large number of children attending the regular school, the amount of busing is cut down, therefore eliminating some of the transportation expense. On the other hand, the distance children come is fairly great; the school serves an area whose boundaries extend 14 miles.)

Summary

Although each represents a different variation, all these centers have a common theme: individual attention by concerned staff in a secure, protected, supervised environment. The parents can forget their fears, during the day-light hours at least, of the dangers lurking even in these neatly-kept neighborhoods. The transportation systems which most private centers operate make them physically accessible, but the fees they must charge place limitations on this accessibility. That parents pay them is less a gauge of their affluence than of the concern that their children receive good care in a safe and orderly setting. Black mothers, as Ruderman (1968) has noted, seek more in day care than white mothers -- they want the kind of training, opportunities to learn, to acquire social and educational skills that will help their children get ahead in the world. Before and after school care in the black community has an added function -- that of counteracting the effects of the over-crowded impersonal violence-ridden public schools.

There seems to be a real need for good school age programs in the black community, especially to meet the growing demand from working mothers. In other neighborhoods few proprietary programs for school age children have continued to survive. Apparently both the need and the willingness to pay for care is greater in the black community.

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CHAPTER X

SMALL NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS

In our sample there were half a dozen or more facilities which seemed to constitute a special group: the small, neighborhood center, proprietary or non-profit, which because of the comparatively few children enrolled can provide a particularly warm, home-like atmosphere. These centers were located in varied neighborhoods and served assorted populations. We found that in these centers, children could have some of the best experiences school age programs can offer; by their small size they could avoid the institutional climate of larger settings and at the same time offer children the positive feelings they can acquire from a well-integrated, cohesive peer group that enjoys being -- and doing things, involving work -- together.

To illustrate this type of center we have chosen to present a series of vignettes, in place of the more lengthy case studies. These programs are dissimilar in many ways, particularly in the physical settings, but frequently very much alike in the individual attention and "homey" family-like environments they can provide, often on very little money. They are a type of vest-pocket child care facility tucked into residential neighborhoods of varying socio-economic level. Often they seem to combine the learning opportunities that group programs can provide, with the warmth and intimacy of a home setting.

The Small Combination Program: The Club House 1/

Our observer notes:

This is a child-run, child-oriented, child-enjoyed, child-designed center. It really is a delightful and enchanting club house for extended day children.

The Club House, as the school age program is called, is located in a rather drab grubby area of one of Los Angeles' many beach communities. Extended day care was added four years ago, ten years after the nursery school was begun, to accommodate the children of neighborhood families -- mostly one-parent in the beginning, now half of them two-parent families who have remarried. The physical site consists of three very small houses and their adjoining yards. In one house live the director and her husband; the largest building houses the preschool program, and the smallest, the school age group. Of the latter, our observer notes:

They really have their own clubhouse. The main room has a stove, sink, refrigerator, and picnic tables in it. A small back room has a large comfortable couch and a television set. Another area is for play with blocks, dolls and animals; a small back bed room has a dramatic play corner very nicely furnished for 6 to 9 year old girls, and a cozy reading corner with pillows.

This kind of setting clearly was conducive to producing the valuable kinds of social interaction which we saw taking place between the children, and between the children and the young, charming, college student, one year away from graduation, who described the program to us. As teacher-director of extended day program, she works full time with the children, which in summer often means not an eight hour but a ten hour day: *We really get to know each other, particularly in the summer; they are my family.* At one time an aide and classroom helper at the nearby public elementary school which the children attend, she spends a great deal of her time going to plays and other programs at school to see her charges perform. *Miss S.,* notes our observer, *evidently takes the role of a very interested older sibling* 2/.

The following narrative reveals some of the reasons why this is, as Miss S. points out, like a family unit where the children -- instead of constantly quarreling, as so often happens in this age group -- worry about and defend one another:

When I arrived there were 22 children, all extended day, inside playing games, working puzzles, baking cookies, or outside with trucks in the sand box, hanging by their legs from the climbing ladder or shooting baskets, and one 'big as a minute' very young teacher. (Miss

1/ Not only does this program combine nursery and school age but funding also represents a combination of options; fees are paid both by parents and, for AFDC families enrolled, by the Department of Social Welfare.

2/ All of the children of the nursery school went to the same public school and the relationship with the principal and teachers is exceptionally warm. The principal refers children to the center, which in turn participates in school functions.

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S., whom the children call Suzie).

The very young teacher asked one of the 13 year old girls, who had been at the center for the past six years, to show me the day camp area. For the next one and one-half hours, in a torrent of enthusiastic words, I was told everything the 'kids' did at the Club House, from the Mexican meal they had cooked for their parents the night before to being asked to carefully inspect the books on the library shelves. She said, 'You will find young books for the very young child and older books for the older children, because young children really wouldn't enjoy books that are too old for them and older children don't like to read baby books.'

As we passed through the interest areas I received the following type of explanation from my 13 year old guide. 'Oh, yes, over there is a typewriter. We do our own newspaper and Suzie has it printed. All the kids write articles. I did a funny one about Suzie. Didn't I Suzie?' Suzie passing by said, 'Oh, I can do that tomorrow night.' (Note -- since Suzie spent last night at the Mexican dinner for parents, this must be an example of the ten hour day she puts in. She had said in the interview that the hardest part was the long hours necessary to get everything done).

My guide revealed that hot lunches are cooked in the other building, 'but we serve ourselves. You will notice that we don't have a kitchen here. Of course we have special duties; some serve milk, some the hot dish and others clean up. It all goes very smooth. We like to do things ourselves.'

'We have monitors who do certain things every day. You will notice a list of the monitors; some clean up the book shelves, some vacuum clean, others straighten game shelves. We used to have a woman come in and clean, but we don't need her now. We like this rug. It's a pretty color and it's throughout the whole house except the bathroom. It's easy to keep clean.'

'You will notice the paper plate near the bathroom. It makes it a lot easier for us to know when someone is inside the room.' The paper plate was lettered 'No Peeky' on one side and 'Come on in' on the other side. Each child carefully changes the message as he goes in or comes out.

The arrangement of the rooms, I thought, was especially workable. One room was set aside for the TV which was placed in a closet alcove and a very large rounded well sat-in davenport at the end of the room. My guide said that just before lunch everyone comes in and Suzie reads to them from a book of a continuing story. I could imagine the activity as being most quiet, restful, and groupy-secure in this setting. When three girls borrowed the game of Life from my guide's personal cubby (she had brought it from home) they used that room to set up the game on the floor because they could be in there without interruption.

One very small room was divided into two sections with a round table for a game area where three girls played Monopoly all morning; the other side of the room was the doll area and four girls spent their time taking turns playing baby and mother and daddy going to work. Another room had a very highly child-decorated area for reading. The children had pasted contact paper on the windows and bright red and orange light filtered through; they had bought a bright red and orange shag rug and made bright red curtains. The other side of the room contained a shelf with a number of building blocks and again was arranged in such a way that boys could build a super structure without being concerned that someone passing would destroy their work.

Extended day staff consists primarily of Miss S; the presence of other adults including the director of the center makes the adult/child ratio approximately 1 to 12. The depth of Miss S's involvement with the children is so great, however, that the numerical data do not accurately reflect the quality of the relationship. During the summer she takes many trips with the children; she worries over them and works very hard at trying to keep things interesting and exciting. When we asked about children leaving the program, she and the director both laughed and said that sometimes the children decide that they are getting too old and say they don't want to come anymore, but few really leave; most of them keep coming back.

A program like that at The Club House is hardly wealthy; fees are $12.00 a week or scaled to whatever the director thinks the parent can afford, more or less. In the process of encouraging the children in their own idea for a small fund-raising project, the director discovered a delightful fringe-benefit. The interviewer commented:

When I asked her about parent participation she kind of laughed and said that she had always wanted much more of it than she had been able to get and that the sort of things that

happened were not at all what she had predicted. At Christmas time the children were making potholders and proposed the idea that maybe they could sell some. She supported them in it and thought they might raise a couple of dollars. It turned out that parents were eager and delighted to take pot holders and sell them at offices and places of work. She said it is the first time she had ever gotten such eager participation. The children ended up selling almost $300.00 worth of potholders, which she said took care of the entire Christmas vacation. Then they used the money they had earned to re-decorate the back house and to buy things that they wanted for the program. This kind of activity really got them excited and now they are going to put on a spaghetti dinner for parents and are thinking of a money-making scheme for this summer. The program operates on very little money so that having this kind of extra money to take trips and to do things that children want makes for many more experiences for children and also provides the children with a great deal of opportunity for responsibility and real decision-making.

We found this program to be an interesting example of a proprietary center that has managed to provide a really warm, lively, meaningful place for school age children. It has no institutional feeling about it. The climate is much more like that of a private club house which children share with someone who is old enough to facilitate and help them do what they want to do, but young enough that she is really perceived almost as a role model of a late adolescent young adult. As teacher-director of the program, Miss S. works very hard keeping things organized and clear and reminding children of the choices that are available.

A Contemporary Innovation: The Apartment-Complex as a Site for Child Care

Village View Center

In the course of our study we visited one facility which is unique in a number of ways. The setting for the program is an apartment building containing 300 units, an outdoor swimming pool and an indoor recreation area. The Village View Apartments are located on a broad boulevard in a mixed-use area -- partly commercial, partly residential -- in what appears to be a low/middle-middle class neighborhood in the Los Angeles area. Across the main street is a newer apartment complex which contains a nursery school; adjoining Village View on a side street is a city park with recreation facilities, and next to it are the grounds of the elementary school. Within Village View itself is a small one-room child care center, available for the use of tenants only, just off the carpeted lobby and within sight of the swimming pool, set in the tropical garden-like surroundings of an inner court yard 3/. The room itself is carpeted, pleasantly furnished with a rocking chair, another easy chair, a number of small, child-sized chairs and several tables well-stocked with Mattel-like toys 4/. A small bathroom adjoins the room.

Mrs. H., the person hired by the apartment owners to be in charge of the program, emerged from her cleaning chores in the bathroom to explain the program to us. Mrs. H. is a graduate of business college and has school age children of her own 5/. She functions in the role not of teacher but of neighborhood mother, describing herself as *just a part time mother* for the children in the center, with no intention of making a career of her job. Although she has no formal training in education, she clearly has natural qualifications for her job; clear, authoritative, and helpful, she uses a great deal of common sense in her communication with the children. We watched as she helped a three year old in his play:

. . . he was requesting one toy after another. He would say what he wanted and Mrs. H. would get it down from the shelf. He would play with it for five or ten minutes until he found out what it would do, then gave it back to her to put it away -- his investigative, exploratory behavior was responded to by Mrs. H. in a very facilitative fashion. She said, 'I'll get you the hardest puzzle we have' and timed him to see how long it would take, while the older children kibitzed and told him how to do it.

3/ Cost to users of the child care facilities is $.75 an hour, or $10.00 a week during the school year for extended day and $20.00 for all day care.

4/ The director buys all toys for the facility herself at a near-by discount store; she was given complete authority to decide what is needed and what is to be purchased, but the budget is minimal.

5/ Mrs. H's own children attend the elementary school so she has close personal contact with the school secretary and nurse. She knows that it makes the children more comfortable to know they have have someone to go to bat for them. *One little girl was so upset because she had lost her jacket at school; I called the secretary who located it and it made her feel so much better.*

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Ten children, ranging in age from two to ten, receive care in this program which has only recently (within the last four years) been licensed by the State Department of Welfare 6/. Child care had been provided by the apartment building owners for five years prior to that time, on an informal basis, in order to attract tenants; the device was apparently so highly successful that it came to the attention of the Department of Social Welfare which sought to upgrade the service from its custodial baby-sitting function. The Department of Social Welfare apparently was at a loss as to how to fit this square peg into the round hole of child care licensing laws. When we observed, one three-year-old, two five-year-olds, one six-year-old and one ten-year old boy who attends military academy and uses the program on holidays and during vacation periods, and who acts as Mrs. H's unofficial 'assistant,' were present. Mrs. H. pointed out that many of the children for whom she cares have mothers who have recently been divorced and have moved from their homes into the apartment complex; the children's lives as well as their mothers' are in a state of upheaval, and they are often suffering acutely from the trauma of a family break-up and separation from father.

The program itself is as loose and flexible as the child care arrangements, which provide care for children on a spontaneous hourly, daily or weekly basis. Often, mothers who are not employed leave children for a few hours in the morning to do their shopping, or drop in along with the children; while the latter play, the mothers, many in desperate need of someone to talk to, chat with Mrs. H. or with each other. The mornings are apt to be highly socially-oriented for the children as well as the adults; apartment-dwellers and people from the outside move in a steady stream in and out of the room. On one morning, our observer comments, within the space of one hour:

> *. . . a-lady-across-the-fence type of adult, a janitor, a mailman, a swimming pool maintenance man and a tenant all stopped by for a chat, which at all times included the older boys clustered around the TV set. Conversation ranged from how the leaves got into the apartment foyer to the school picnic for the Little League ball game. It was the easy bantering which might be found in the kitchen or back yard of any home.*

Working parents and children leave their apartments in the morning at the same time, the parents going to the parking lot for their cars, and the children to the child care room where they deposit their apartment key with Mrs. H. If an older child becomes ill during the day or needs to change clothes for a Little League baseball game he may go to his own apartment with Mrs. H's permission.

Clearly such a program could not work for school age children without an extended environment, provided in this case by the park across the street, as well as the swimming pool 7/. In the summer, all the children go to summer school in the morning; in the afternoon they may swim (there is a life-guard at the pool) or go to the park. Since there is only one staff member, if one goes all go and Mrs. H. locks the door, takes the little ones in tow and off they go to the park 8/. There are large grassy areas, a tether ball, a huge inventive play area with lots of sand, and two buildings out of which the recreation program operates. Our observer comments:

> *In one of these buildings is a grandmotherly-type lady who keeps penny candy which she sells to the children and who dispenses balls, information, tender loving care, joshing, etc. In the other building is the recreation director who has several students working for him. On the particularl day I arrived the children were doing a large mural painting.*

There is no set activity schedule; *We just play it by ear,* notes Mrs. H., adding that one of the difficulties of such a program is that it is nearly impossible to finish activities with so many interruptions. She spends a good deal of her time refereeing battles (*I have three first graders who are 'only' children -- they can be tearing one another apart. By the age of seven they are not so competitive)* and trying to keep up with the children, keeping track of where they are. *The park is good for this,* she points out, indicating that she can supervise them more easily there.

We were struck by the fact that such an arrangement for extended day effectively meets the needs of all the participants. The children have a setting close to home (and in case of emergency

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6/ The license, for intermediate child care, limits capacity to ten children.

7/ The room itself is furnished primarily for preschool children, who made up the bulk of the group a few years ago. Now the pendulum has swung to extended day care.

8/ The older children, however, may come and go by themselves as long as they stay in the apartment complex and keep Mrs. H. informed of their whereabouts: *I must know where they are.*

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they have home itself, within a few steps) full of friends and neighbors, adults as well as children. An observer comments:

> *This seems like a useful arrangement for school age children -- they have intimate surroundings, softness, privacy, -- the combination of a home-like place to come to, plus lots of activities going on in the park, plus the option of going to their own apartments if their mothers give permission . . .*

The wide-age range encourages the "teaching" of younger ones by the older ones. For parents it offers comparatively inexpensive care with a variety of options as to hours and cost; it requires no transportation or time getting to and from the center, it meets some of the social and emotional needs of the mothers 9/. Out-of-state parents have a special need for such an arrangement since they have no ready way of finding someone to care for their children when they move into the area. The apartment owners have a financial advantage to gain; rental of units is guaranteed by offering child care at a nominal sum on the premises.

Like any program, the apartment-complex child care setting is not without its problems and limitations. One which Village View has experienced in the past is the tendency toward a baby-sitting operation, in which possibly unqualified people provide at best only custodial care and at worst no real supervision at all 10/. The Department of Social Welfare in dealing with this problem has sought upgrading of teacher qualifications and site requirements, but the department still has a problem figuring out what to do with programs with unusual facilities, as Mr. K. at Chevron and Mrs. B. at Western Avenue Sports Club have previously pointed out. On the other side of the coin is the danger that in the search for licensing standards such unstructured, unregimented arrangements as that at Village View may lose some of their uniqueness and efficiency in meeting children's and parents' needs.

There are other problems which present themselves for such small centers. Getting enough equipment, particularly for school age children, is difficult; there is very little available for that age group at Village View and the indoor activities tend to be limited to helping the younger children or watching TV, partly because of space, limited staff and continued interruptions. However, the combination of home, extended day room, park recreation area and elementary school within one manageable area (which relieves the transportation problem so effectively, among other things) has provided so many beneficial aspects and promises so much in the way of potential, that we found it to be an exciting variation in extended day care options.

The Small Non-Profit Church Sponsored Center: Aviation Blvd.

There is yet another type of small neighborhood center which provides care for school age children, either in combination with preschool or by itself -- the non-profit program which operates out of church facilities. Frequently equipment and transportation, as well as the site, and in some cases financial and administrative assistance, are provided by the sponsoring church. While some of these centers reflect the teachings of the church in their programs, many are non-secretarian in approach and frequently are given considerable autonomy in decision-making. From our observations, it would appear that given competent staff the greater the autonomy permitted -- particularly to the director -- the more successful the program in terms of providing beneficial services to children and their families. One such center struck us as being a good example of the value of such a program, as well as illustrating some of the problems.

The program at Aviation Blvd. Methodist Church, established in 1972 at the request of a nearby elementary school for child care services, provides before and after school care for approximately one dozen children between the ages of five and eight 11/. Situated in a very small but pleasant room in the Sunday School department of the church, the extended day program enjoys the use of the church facilities (including a series of very small, concrete paved courtyards, bounded by the nigh walls of the sanctuary and other buildings in the self-contained complex), personnel,

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9/ The children walk to the neighboring elementary school; Mrs. H. uses her own car to transport the older children to other recreational places in the community or to pick up ill children at school.

10/ We hasten to note that the term "qualified" does not necessarily imply academic course requirements or credentialling; it does, in the case of the school age children, mean someone with a knowledge of *what makes these children tick*, as Mr. T. would say, and how to provide a variety of interesting activity choices.

11/ The figure tends to fluctuate since attendance requirements are not rigid. Summer attendance is particularly variable since parents take vacations and the children with them, or children come from out of town to visit grandparents and come to the center for a few weeks.

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including custodian, secretary and volunteers from the membership, and station wagon. This alliance as well as small program size, results in a number of characteristics, some conducive to providing good services and some not. There is no waiting list; the demand for services which prompted the opening of the center just a year ago has suddenly fallen following the drop in school enrollment. Compared with larger centers the process of enrolling a child is comparatvely simple; a registration form including emergency information is filled out by the parent when she or he comes to the office to apply. The parents, almost all of whom are working, represent a mixed population, of which half is black and half white, including Mexican-American, with 25% from low income levels and the rest middle class. They mostly live in the immediate area, a community in transition due in part to the noise and congestion of the airport near by 12/. Increasing numbers of multiple-dwelling units and lower property values have brought a concomitant increase in the number of single-parent families. Although it is difficult for these working parents to spend time visiting the child care setting, the center encourages them to do so, in a mimeographed circular which gives them suggestions for what to look for when they observe the children.

Mrs. G., the teacher-director, is a young married graduate student of 26; she has a background of training in special education and is getting her Masters Degree in that field. She comments:

> *I want parents to know that there are developmental stages, so they don't expect too much of a child. I'm interested in giving children choices -- they don't get that in their regular school setting.*

In order to encourage parents to think about the goals of the center, and the role parents play in achieving them, she distributes printed materials at the parent meetings which are held every three months. At these meetings discussions are held on how parents can help children and what play equipment is needed. In addition, films of the school age children are frequently shown. We asked about parent turn-out at the meetings and Mrs. G. told us:

> *At first it was poor so I devised a strategy. I got kids involved with programs for parents -- plays and so forth. This brought the parents out. You have to get to the parents through the children. We provide dinner and baby-sitting services because these are working parents. I had the children design a playground and this got both parents and children involved in a discussion about play equipment.*

Mrs. G's contact with parents is close and frequent because she is anxious that they be aware of their children's needs and that they work along with the center to meet them. Solving the behavior problems which occur frequently with children in this program is one of Mrs. G's primary goals, and she talks with parents and teachers frequently about her concerns about individual children.

To alleviate behavior problems Mrs. G. concentrates on emotional development and helping the children to express their feelings:

> *We have signs that the children can wear around their necks to acknowledge their -- and other children's -- feelings: 'Today, I feel happy, Today, I feel grumpy. . . sleepy, etc.' I believe in helping them with their feelings. We have had great luck minimizing behavior problems this way. The most rewarding part of the job is watching their emotional development -- it's so gratifying . . .*

We watched one summer afternoon as Mrs. G. worked with a group of four black children -- three boys and one girl:

> *Mrs. G. was as excited and eager about the subject as were the children. She 'read' from a book about how to make animal pictures with hand prints (thumb, finger, heel of hand, etc.) but spent most of the time asking questions which elicited problem-solving behavior and information from children: 'What's unusual about this tree-limb?' "What kind of a place would this animal live in ?' "What are the parts of <u>your</u> hand -- this animal's'hand''? etc. She brought in, in the space of a few minutes, counting, recognition of body parts, science (nature study), colors, art techniques, etc. Her physical appearance was not of 'teacher' but mother. After the animated discussion by the group, Mrs. G. urged the children to go to the table where crayons, ink (for prints) and paper were laid out, to do their own thing. She announced that she would leave the book on the other table for consultation if anyone desired it, and asked if they would like some music on the record player to draw by. ('Yertle the*

12/ As we observed, the deafening roar of planes flying low overhead, creating a strange sensation of total eclipse as they blotted out the sun, occurred with startling regularity. No conversation was possible during these periods; although the children, used to such interruptions appeared unconcerned, we wondered what effect the noise might have physically and psychologically.

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Turtle' was their choice). When they finished their drawings -- some of which were delightfully ingenious ('Oh, we must put these up!' she exclaimed enthusiastically), Mrs. G. packed everyone in her car and we went off to the park.

Summer is a time when especially good things happen. Trips to the park and beach provide the opportunities for *lots of nature things -- sea shells, looking at algae, building sand castles, nature walks.* When the group is small Mrs. G. uses her own car; since there are fewer children in the summer (there may be no more than four or five on a given day) she can pack everybody into it, and take off 13/. When there are more children a station wagon is available through the church. Because the group is small, Mrs. G. can walk with the children to and from the elementary school only three blocks away.

Like many other small centers, as well as some larger ones, the program is almost totally dependent on community resources for sports and large muscle activities. The outdoor play area, consisting of very narrow spaces between buildings, is highly restrictive by the very nature of its physical qualities, necessitating special rules since balls, bounce off stairways, posts and walls. Hopscotch and tetherball are almost the only games which can be managed in the cramped space; as a result, trips to a local park are frequent. We accompanied the children on one such trip to a small city-owned mini-park a mile or so from the center, tucked in between the surrounding residences. It consisted of a long narrow immaculately manicured expanse of lawn with a posted sign forbidding ball-playing. There were no props available, nothing to manipulate, test, or explore, and for children beyond the age of four or five the equipment offered little challenge.

Fortunately, the program has several volunteers from the church, one of whom has a swimming pool; the group goes there frequently for barbecues and ice cream in the summer, when the program features a good deal of water play. Mrs. G. is quick to point out that although she is interested in increasing the children's cognitive skills, she does not do so to the exclusion of the physical. Noting that school age program needs a balance between the two, she emphasizes the fact that they have a lot of outdoor activity as well. The boys play ball on the playground of the nearby elementary school and can participate in Little League after school. One of the three part-time teachers who compose the rest of the staff is a young man, a 28 year old student teacher who specializes in physical education, particularly baseball. Mrs. G. told us *I think it is important to have a man. We have so many one-parent families.* A male church custodian also works around the area; the boys watch and help him with his duties.

Aviation Blvd. Methodist is another example of a program which works, nd works well, because of its director. Without her skills and dedication, the center could be in deep trouble, and it may well be when she leaves at the end of the year to go to a new school being built by the church in another community. She, herself, wonders what will happen to the center: *It's touch and go financially for this program.* With only twelve children the fee of $18.50 for kindergarteners and $15.00 for first through third graders leaves very little for staff salaries and equipment 14/. The biggest problem in almost all centers is money, but for the small non-profit ones which have wildly fluctuating enrollment and no steady source of income on which they can depend, a temporary drop can mean sudden death.

Another problem which looms large on the horizon is lack of adequate bus transportation. If the center doesn't get a bus, the program may not be able to continue. Tied as it is to the elementary school, and without physical resources of its own, it may die if it cannot provide a more stable transportation system; it cannot rely on the next director to escort children to and from school and do all the driving to other points in the community, nor can it take children from other schools to bolster its sagging enrollment without buses to move them back and forth 15/.

13/ The program gets insurance coverage through the church for transportation of children in staff automobiles. In the event of emergency children can be taken to a hospital located two blocks away. Mrs. K. notes, *There has never been anything serious.*

14/ Special arrangements are made for parents with more than one child. In the summer months, a flat fee of $22.00 is charged for all grade levels. Summer enrollment fluctuates greatly; at the time of our interview, twenty children were enrolled, five of whom had attended during the winter session, but the figure changes from week to week.

15/ *It's only three blocks and five minutes away,* the director points out, *but the children can't walk back and forth by themselves.* No othere staff is available at that time and there is not sufficient stability in the volunteer help.

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United Christian

A similar program, United Christian Center, is worth mentioning because it reveals, by contrast with Aviation Blvd. Methodist, what makes programs work and what hangs them up. United Christian is an inner-city, church-sponsored program for children ages 2 - 7; the preschool has been in existence since the 1940's, and is the major part of the program. Twelve Kindergarteners and thirteen first and second grade children,from primarily one-parent low-income black and Mexican-American families, are also enrolled in the center The director, Ms M., a young college graduate with a teaching credential and eroding idealism, is struggling with a number of problems which prevent her from achieving program goals. One is the lack of parental involvement (*We tried to get across to parents how to work with us, but that doesn't happen very often.*) Part of the difficulty is that although many of the parents work in the area, they do not live there. The director has worked hard at getting parents to understand that they are to come into the center with their children, not just drop them off at the curb. When children have behavior problems, Ms M. tries to get parents to come in and talk, to work with the staff to find a solution, but, she notes, *we are often not successful.*

In the past relations with the principal of the elementary school were strained to the point that the teachers were instructed not to speak with Ms. M. because she had questioned the efforts of the school district and, worse still, the competence of its staff, in meeting needs of children, particularly in the area of special education. Fortunately this year, when she requested of the school that all center children be put in the morning session, Ms M. notes, relations were more cordial 16/.

Added to her difficulties is an inherited teaching staff:

> *I've tried to help the teachers, one in particular, learn how to communicate with the children -- I've held regular meetings, provided inf mation, tired to set up situations and then talked about them. I've handed out literature, set an example, given them the opportunity to observe -- nothing has worked. Now I don't hope to change it.*

Fees for the preschool are scaled to income, but at the time of our observations there was a flat $5.00 per child per week charge for after school care. Because of increasing costs this figure has since been raised to $7.50 a week. For the summer program a fee of $10.00 a week for all grade levels is charged. The actual cost per week for the after school program is estimated as $10.00 per child per week including supplies, maintenance, food and teacher salaries. (The remaining $2.50 a week cost is apparently absorbed by the two parents who pay more, plus receipts from other programs, although Ms M notes that the school age program is expected to, and very nearly does, pay for itself). A custodian is paid for out of the total center budget; very little has been spent on equipment since the original capital outlay. The one regular primary teacher is paid $2.10 per hour. There is no before school care)the school session in which all the children are enrolled begins early in the morning) and meals, except for a snack, are not provided. (The school provides a sack lunch as part of its free lunch program.)

More than money, the program needs good volunteer help. The center does get extra adults in the summer from RSVP (Retired Seniors Volunteer Program) who spend time away from the group with individual children who need special attention. The director herself does not teach regularly (although she would rather do so, she says she cannot afford it). Much of her time is spent circulating informally, talking with people who come through the center. When we observed in the summer, one of her jobs -- obviously the kind she preferred -- was to deliver a batch of kittens, in the plastic wading pool (mirus water) which served as their temporary home, to the extended day room where the children made them the focal point of their play for the entire time we were there. The summer program, particularly appeared to be going better than one might suspect from Ms M's gloomy description of the school year program's problems. This was the first time school age care has been provided in the summer, initiated at Ms. M's request to provide care for children who formerly had been in a family day care home: *The woman moved away and the mothers of the neighborhood had no one to rely on -- I asked for this program because there seemed to be such a need for it.*

We spoke with the teacher of the school age group, since the director was not familiar with the workings of the two week old program. A kindergarten teacher in the Los Angeles city schools during the school year, she commented on the comparative lack of structure during the summer: *We like to make the program casual, flexible, free-choice as a relief from the pressures of school.* She spoke about Alex, a little Mexican-American boy who had taken refuge behind the cubbies in a private space especially created for such a purpose: *He's feeling a little sad today.* She went on to say that he had just repeated kindergarten and would be going into first grade, but she was

16/ Since the center is set up to take children in the afternoon only and the school is on double session, Ms M. must make this request each year.

concerned about him *because he seems to miss his father, who left his mother when he was two, terribly and has developed learning problems.* This is the kind of child the center tries to help with individual attention. The teacher told us she found the children "fascinating" because they all knew each other so well from regular school and seemed to have worked out their own social system. We watched as they conducted mock battles with inflated rubber bats, jousting energetically indoors and out, from the jungle gym to the long steel ladder which led to the top of the fence, or cuddled the kittens in blankets on their laps as they sat on the rug indoors 17/. The only restriction was that they not use the bats for purposes they were not intended -- to hurt other children or to destroy equipment.

Cooking, crafts, going to the Book-mobile, being read to by the teacher are typical activities. In the afternoon the children in day care join neighborhood children up to the 6th grade in a program regularly provided by the larger Center. Using an inner-city theme ("Knowing Los Angeles"), it includes a number of field trips in vans owned by the Center to places such as the Department of Light and Power.

It seems clear that although the director has tried, she has been unsuccessful in getting the necessary support of either school or parents; on top of that she has made little headway with existing staff. She now apparently directs her energies -- with greater chance of success, we suspect -- toward lighting a candle within the school age program instead of cursing the darkness in the firmly entrenched nursery school. In spite of the difficulties, she points out that there are some really good people in the total program: *I suppose*, she comments, *we're a lot better off than a lot of places, even though I complain.* Clearly, however, without effective interaction between the various components of school age program -- director, parents, teaching staff and the school itself -- it is difficult, though not entirely impossible, to provide the kinds of experiences children need as well as the kinds of services parents require.

Because there is no real organized system of communication available to directors of extended day program, especially such as those provided for nursery school administrators (i.e., The California Children's Centers Director's Association and the PreSchool Association), the individual director, like the working mother as sole parent, has the burden of dealing with problems alone. Ms M., like Mrs. B. at Western Avenue Sports Club, is about to give up the good fight; she is leaving to return to the East Coast at the end of the year. Often the struggle to provide good program claims as its casualties good directors as well as the less good. Those who are most successful tend to develop coping strategies over time, like Father William, through sheer perseverance 18/. They build up a dogged determination arising from the courage of their own convictions that school age programs are a neglected but rremendously important part of the whole child care picture.

17/ The room was flowing over with animal life -- hamsters, guinea pigs, kittens, ants in a jar (found by two of the boys in the yard).

18/ Asked why he incessantly stood on his head, the old man replied:

In my youth, Father William said to his son
I feared it might injure the brain
But now that I'm perfectly sure I have none
Why, I do it again and again.

Lewis Carroll, Alice Adventures in Wonderland, pg 62.

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CHAPTER XI

SCHOOL AGE CARE: PAST AND FUTURE

. . . it is a sobering fact that, neither in our communities nor in the nation as a whole, is there a single agency that is charged with the responsibility of assessing and improving the situation of the child in his total environment. As it stands, the needs of children are parcelled out among a hopeless confusion of agencies with diverse objectives, conflicting jurisdictions and imperfect channels of communication. The school, the health department, the churches, welfare services, youth organizations, the medical profession, libraries, the police, recreation programs -- all of these see the children of the community at one time or another, but no one of them is concerned with the total pattern of life for children in the community: where, how, and with whom they spend their waking hours and what may be the impact of these experiences on the development of the child as an individual and as a member of society (Bronfenbrenner, 1970, pg 163,164).

Bronfenbrenner's troubling quotation describes very well the void in community responsibility for children of school age -- a void which good day care services could help to fill. In this final chapter we will try to sum up some circumstances which create the void and to suggest some possibilities which might contribute to filling it. The discussion which follows is based on the assumption that a hard look at services which already exist and manage to survive always provides a good beginning for assessing the possible.

Existing Services: A Summary of Findings

School age day care, like that for preschool children, is provided in Los Angeles County under public, non-profit and proprietary sponsorships. The day care services which now exist in the community are provided by:

Public elementary schools. These services are usually housed in special buildings on (or adjacent to) public school grounds, sponsored by local school districts and funded by state and federal money. They may serve children from kindergarten through sixth grade. (These buildings also frequently house programs for children of nursery age).

Day care sponsored by welfare department. Care is provided for both nursery and school age children. Transportation is provided if necessary.

Private elementary schools. Day care is often provided as an inducement to working parents to enroll their children in private school, usually serving kindergarten through sixth grade.

Day care centers for preschool children (both proprietary and non-profit).
1. Many centers provide full day care for kindergarteners only.
2. Some centers accommodate a few five to eight year olds who attended the preschool program and can walk from elementary school to the center.

Day care centers (both proprietary and non-profit). Services are provided for both nursery school and for school age children. Such centers may or may not provide transportation.

Day care for school age only (usually proprietary, occasionally non-profit). Care is provided for children of school age only, usually kindergarten through sixth grade. Transportation is provided.

An Assessment of the Availability of School Age Care vis a vis Preschool Day Care

It is hard to make exact comparisons, but it appears that considerably more group care is available for children of preschool age than for children of school age. At present about 800 facilities are known to us that provide care for children age five or younger, as compared to the approximately 200 facilities found to offer care for children of school age. Of these school age facilities at least 50% are publicly sponsored. Among centers for preschool children only about 30% are under public sponsorship.

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Who Uses Group Care

Parents who enroll their school age children in care are likely to have used group care for the child during his preschool years. Most children in group care are between the ages of five and eight years. Few children ages nine through eleven remain in group care. It appears that the middle class black community is especially likely to seek out group care as a desirable service.

Selection among programs is severely limited by the monetary resources of parents. Families who have established their qualifications as "poor" use public care. More affluent families use private care. Probably many families who are above the official poverty guidelines, but struggling, use no care at all. Current patterns of financing force children into programs which are segregated according to socio-economic status.

Program: The Experiences Provided to Children

According to our findings, the program which is offered in school age day care can be described as one of three types:

Simple (Custodial) Activity Programs These programs are characterized by the large numbers of children who are not involved in activities (i.e., horsing around, in transition, self-care, etc.) and by activities which have little continuity and little adult involvement. Associated with these characteristics is an absence of good space, of supplies and equipment and of adult skills and know-how. This type of program is not limited to any particular sponsorship. Its occurrence appears to be tied to absence of adult input and of challenging activities.

Narrow Range Activity Programs These programs, unlike those just described, manage to keep children interested and involved in activities, but they do not offer a wide range of activities. Often the program meets the needs of the particular children being served or it meets their needs for the time being. Some examples of narrow range program types are:

1. The nursery school which provides familiar afternoon care to some of its children after they have gone on into kindergarten and first grade. Activities are limited, but such things as books and dramatic play may provide a focus of interest.

2. The games and simple art/crafts program which provides a room where children can play such games as checkers, Monopoly, etc., or use crayons and water colors.

3. The sports program which specializes in teaching basketball, baseball, etc.

These programs work best when they are self-selected according to a child's preference. The nursery school extended day and the games program probably need to be small in size to be workable.

The Complex Activity Program This program provides activities for children which are not ordinarily introduced in nursery school and which require initiative and encourage continuity. Such activities are characterized by high adult involvement and know-how, good space and ample equipment and supplies. Work activities, such as preparing the afternoon snack, caring for animals, etc., also are a part of these programs. This type of program, with the help of authoritative adult support, appears to develop a social system among the children with responsibilities, obligations and a sense of belonging. Often older children remain in the program and are given opportunities for leadership when they reach junior high school age.

The Ambiguous Status of School Age Day Care

School age day care is in a curious limbo and is often defined by what it is not. It is not a school; it is not a day nursery. The fact that it does care for children places it under jurisdiction of the state licensing agency, but everyone agrees that this is an awkward and undefined relationship. As described, the fire and health departments vacillate between applying school, summer camp, or day nursery requirements -- an approach which is perceived by the licensed on a scale which ranges from ridiculous to malevolent.

The ambiguous status of school age care also becomes apparent in an examination of staffing practices. Most of the leadership in current programs comes from people with training in early childhood education or in elementary education. Neither of these training programs appears to provide sufficient expertise in dealing with older children or in providing a stimulating environment

for them. Also we must conclude that certification for work with y ng children or an elementary teaching credential does not guarantee competence in caring for children of school age.

Our findings indicate that adults who work with school age children need competences which are not provided in the training programs for either preschool or elementary school teachers -- namely:

1) The ability to provide leadership and to set limits, in ways which help children to understand how social systems work and give them experience with authoritative but non-punitive models.

2) The ability to set up an environment where children can learn skills which can be developed later into both vocational interests and profitable leisure time activities.

3) As part of the first two, the ability to generate a climate where children can develop values and serious commitments.

At present there is no defined role of child care work in school age care. Nor are there training programs which prepare people for such an occupation with older children. Perhaps the training which would most closely resemble this is the preparation of group workers or child care workers for work with children in residential treatment centers.

Cost of Care

Accurate information on cost of care was not available. Most centers which offer care for both school age and preschool children do not separate out the costs of preschool from school age care. Another complication in assessing costs is that some programs (such as Board of Education Children's Centers) charge and receive reimbursement only for the hours of care given, while other centers (including welfare sponsored centers) 1/ charge a flat fee for service without strictly tying it to hours in attendance.

Centers characteristically reported that cost of care was the same for school age as for preschool. Careful costing might well substantiate this, despite the fact that an adult can work with a larger group of school age than of preschool children. A good program for school age children provides planning time for staff and space especially for the school age program. In preschool programs staff often meet and plan during nap time, a saving which is not possible for school age staff. There is also a loss when space is empty during hours children are in school. Both of these features of school age programming increase the cost of care.

Transportation adds greatly to cost of care of school age programming and yet is a necessary service for programs not within close walking distance. The paucity of proprietary and non-profit programs for school age only probably is due to the difficulty in getting a service which includes transportation and partial space use to pay for itself.

It is here that the current methods of funding complicate the delivery of services. Day care programs offered at the elementary school where a child is enrolled do not require transportation systems. However, as currently funded (in California), eligibility restrictions eliminate many children who are in need of care. Private programs rarely get a large enough clientele from one school alone and also have the problem of obtaining a site which has the proper commercial zoning near an elementary school. Therefore, these privately sponsored programs must add a transportation system at a cost which tends to eliminate many families who need care for their children 2/.

Other Resources

Undoubtedly families use many other resources beside centers for day care, such as family day care, informal neighborhood arrangements, sitters, relatives and siblings at home. Parents can

1/ These centers are now being forced to switch to hours of daily attendance as a basis for reinbursement, a practice which leads to problems discussed later in the chapter.

2/ The other alternative for private care which we found was the preschool center that also cares for children of school age and lets children walk to the center or makes informal (and usually unofficial) use of a staff member's automobile. These programs, while low in cost, usually serve few children and find it difficult to offer a complex activity program. They are able to exist because of their small scale of operation.

also piece together arrangements by using group programs which have purposes other than day care. Some offer excellent supervision for the limited time that a child is there; others only offer protection from physical harm or provide the supervision that comes with guarding of exhibits, books, etc. Examples of such programs are:

Elementary school playgrounds. City recreation departments provide a worker. The playground is not open on rainy days, holidays, at beginning and end of school terms or if the worker is sick. Indoor facilities are not provided.

Department of recreation/parks facilities. Recreation centers offer classes, sports and activities and supervised playgrounds.

Youth serving agencies. Scouts, Boys and Girls Clubs, YM/YWCA, etc., offer a variety of programs.

Libraries, cultural centers, museums. These can also be used by school age children as a place to go.

Many of these programs offer opportunities and experiences which are valuable to children of school age. However, again we meet the problem of transportation. Often such programs can only be attended by children who have non-working mothers to serve as chauffeurs or by children who live in neighborhoods where it is possible and safe to walk, bike, or use public transportation without adult supervision. Our findings also indicate that public summer school is commonly used by parents as a day care service.

The Special Problems of School Age Care

School age care has two major advantages over preschool programs: the competence of its children, and its freedom from pressures to be "school". After years of observing young children in day care, we were impressed by the much greater competence of school age children. Observing young children in day care, one fairly often sees children who are "falling apart" or losing track of themselves and who need adult attention at times when it is not available. We didn't see these kinds of problems with school age children; they appeared independent of adults, even in settings which had little to offer.

Further, school age care, unlike preschool, is not burdened with the responsibility for achieving academic goals. Although many educational activities can be observed and staff may hope for educational growth, program goals are not ordinarily stated or evaluated in terms of academic achievement. School happens in another place, and though staff may call themselves teachers, they point out that day care is concerned with the child's leisure. This perception goes a long way in safeguarding a child's self-esteem and leaves children much freer to stay close to their own experience. At their worst school age programs looked like a school recess with the playground supervisor perhaps scapegoating a child or two. And even the worst programs seemed benign compared to many ordinary school classrooms, in which we've observed children who seemed never to measure up to the constantly imposed requirements and expectations.

What bothered us most about much that we saw was its apparent superficiality. If adults were not being negative, they often were not being very positive either, and much of what we saw seemed bland, innocuous, and lacking in impact. It appears that the day for many children in care unfolds something like this:

Get up and eat a hurried breakfast.

Ride to the center with parent or wait for center bus to pick you up.

Wait in center for 30 - 45 minutes until bus leaves for school. During this time a child can watch television, visit, play checkers, but not get seriously involved.

Spend day in school, which is often a large (700 - 1200) impersonal setting requiring passive submission to requirements and rules.

Wait for bus and ride back to the center.

Shoot baskets, play kick ball on center playground.

Watch TV in late afternoon until parents come or bus leaves for home.

At home, eat supper, do homework, watch TV and go to bed.

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Such a day can be devoid of meaningful involvement with parents or other adults. It does not encourage interests or lasting commitments. It requires or elicits little empathy, compassion or the kind of hot anger that comes from caring deeply. Also much time is spent in a kind of limbo of transitions. The day is a series of arbitrary startings and stoppings which further reinforces a passive, superficial mode of coping. Our optimism about the sturdiness of school age children was dampened by realization of the difficulties involved in finding solutions needed to dispel the pervasive air of superficiality. The world of a preschool child is still small and it is closely tied to home and center. Within the small world of the day care center it is possible to create an environment which meets developmental needs. For school age children the world has gotten much larger. As they grow older they need both a school system and access to the opportunities in a community to help them learn and to shape a sense of their future. This larger world of expanded opportunities is often difficult to provide for children in group care. What are the circumstances which contribute to this state of affairs?

Physical Separation From the Community

Much school age day care is provided to keep children from the community. They are protected while in care momentarily from the dangers of unsupervised exploration of a community which is not judged safe or suitable. But in the process they are often cut off from observing or contacting life as it unfolds in the community. School age children need a neighborhood-community setting, and providing for this need is no easy matter. One pressing problem is how to get them into the community. Few of these children seem to walk anywhere. Yet there is an intimacy of knowledge that comes from traversing an area by foot, day after day, that is entirely different from being transported through an area. There is also a growing sense of competence and responsibility which comes with the freedom to explore and map, in one's mind, a neighborhood. For most children enrollment in group care automatically means that they are confined to the center until an age when they refuse to come any longer. And at this point the pendulum swings from total supervision to no supervision at all.

This separation from the community often further isolates children in group care from adults who are doing adult work. Such isolation is now common for many children, but it seems especially pronounced for children in group care. When trips are planned they are often excursions to Disneyland, Marineland or places of amusement; only a few centers choose places of work such as dairies, bakeries, etc. Probably very few children have been to the places where their parents are employed. If you have only two or four bus trips for an entire year, everyone wants to plan something that is exciting. Given a choice, most children will opt for Disneyland or Lion Country Safari rather than a trip to the bank where Joe's mom works.

Informal trips in staff automobiles to hardware stores, markets, hobby shops and lumber yards are important opportunities for experience in the community. Yet legal advisors and insurance companies are effectively eliminating these for centers which do not provide transportation.

Too Few Arenas for Initiative

Another contributor to the superficiality of many children's lives is the absence of an arena for real initiative, an opportunity to do something which is needed or has real impact. Work which needs to be done or self-chosen work both have this potential. Caring for animals, delivering newspapers or groceries, mowing lawns, are activities which have value to the adult community and enable a child to identify himself with the world of work. The opportunity to earn money as a result of one's work is valued by many children. Such opportunities are often rare in day care and some day care systems forbid money-making projects or paid work.

Self-chosen work which takes the form of a goal to be completed is another way in which children learn the meaning of commitment. The opportunity to build such things as a tree house or club house (an opportunity offered in the adventure playgrounds of Denmark or the backyard for children who go home after school) often is missing. The kinds of self-chosen projects which older children undertake frequently require a territorial claim to a piece of space, tools and a variety of supplies (many are discarded or scrounged), all things which are not commonplace in a day care setting.

The absence of such opportunities often leaves children with deficits in those experiences which are essential to give meaning to more formal schooling. A child who has never learned, as a result of his passionate involvement in his own construction, the importance of accurate measurements or the usefulness of finding the middle of something can hardly be expected to devote himself to

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such problems posed in school books. Active involvement in the world of real tasks inevitably creates the need for skills and knowledge. Adolescence becomes a hazardous time for children who have not developed skills and interests during their earlier school years and who have no clear understanding of the feelings of self-esteem which result from completing a difficult project.

Ambiguity of the Adult Role

A further complication is the uncertainty which many child care workers experience about their role. Often their duties are defined in negatives: you are not a parent and not a teacher. As staff have explained, the question of discipline is quite different with school age than with nursery school children, and discipline must be accomplished without the supports built into the authority role of a parent or teacher. A child care worker has to win authority out of the child's respect and the group's understanding of its life together, yet each child brings his personal experience into the setting and interprets interactions in his own way. As Margaret Mead (1949) has observed: *In America the language of each home is different, there is a code in each family that no one else knows.*

The necessity of dealing with issues of diversity often tempts every one to keep things on a safe, superficial level. Especially in public child care adults and children are brought together for reasons which have little to do with parental choice or value systems. Most people staffing centers have not had training which has helped them to deal with differences in values and outlook, nor do many get much encouragement to risk following their intuition about such things. It is usually safer to avoid discussions of differences than risk the consequences of a clarification of an area of real conflict.

For example, touching can have very different meaning from one family to another. In some families touching is a clear expression of affection. In another family it may be used to communicate feelings of fear of helplessness. In others it is used only for expression of sexual feelings, while others may use it intrusively to express feelings of irritation. In a day care program it is understandable that touching can lead to a series of miscommunicated messages. A program which creates a comfortable, homelike atmosphere will also encourage familiar homelike patterns of communication. These expressions will have the potential for a variety of misinterpretations unless the adult can keep communication open on a personal level, taking an active role in the interpretation of feelings.

Program Control by Procedures

One of the advantages which families have over institutions in providing for the needs of their children is their almost unlimited freedom to use their money as they see fit. A family may decide to use its resources for a plane ticket for John to spend two weeks with his grandparents, for Susan to take piano lessons. A family can take advantage of sales, can let their children raise money from selling vegetables or change all these plans if something better comes alone. Such freedoms are seldom available to a program director who must "go by the book". And "the book" of rules and regulations apparently escalates in direct relationship to the age of the program. As each problem appears, typically another regulation is added with little concern for its effect on the broad goal of providing meaningful experiences for the children and for the ecology of the total system. For example:

Hourly Cost. Programs which are funded according to the number of child hours of care given must be very careful to keep the number of child hours in attendance high. Consequently absence or lateness on the part of enrollees must be controlled. Budgeting according to hours of care given often means that a parent must bring the child to the center for sign-in in the morning even though she would prefer a leisurely breakfast at home with the child going directly from home to school. Or a parent may wish to take the child out for three or four weeks in the summer to visit relatives. These experiences may be good for children, but each hour the child is away from the center decreases the center budget. Directors who believe strongly that children should spend time with parents or outside of the center often are torn between the pressing need to keep their budget intact and the child's chances to do other things. Parents are forced to decide whether to relinquish plans for summer camps or trips rather than risk losing their day care slot.

Marshalling Resources. There are many school age facilities which might be shared to the enrichment of the program, but there often is no way to account for costs or to handle liability. For example, a program for preschool and school age children is housed on a junior high school site. The school age children need more space for activities. The junior high gym is available at least one afternoon a week, but the principal will not share it, because the janitor will complain and he

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is uncertain about issues of liability. It is less risky to refuse at the beginning than to hassle the complications of sharing, because there are no rewards for cooperation, only possibilities for trouble.

This same school age program is located within a short walking distance of a Boys Club which has an excellent workshop. Several of the boys want to go there regularly. Their parents would like to arrange for them to report to the center, have a snack and then go to the Boys Club for workshop two or three afternoons a week. The center cannot permit this, because it would have empty slots on these two days, nor could it invite Boys Club children over to visit, thus filling the slots. Consequently these boys can either forget about the workshop or withdraw from day care.

Another center has a limited budget for much needed equipment. They are only permitted to order supplies from the school district catalogue. When a near-by discount outlet has a sale on games, the director cannot buy there, even though she could get exactly what is needed at a fraction of the catalogue cost.

Apparently problems such as these can be solved, because we found programs which had found solutions. However, the extreme importance of facilitating cooperation and problem-solving for the sake of the children does not seem to have displaced the fear of administrators that things cannot be accounted for or will get out of control. It takes a fearless and well-entrenched program director to do battle with the head office.

Perhaps child care needs different accounting systems: new ways of bookkeeping which can support cooperation, efficient use of resources and encouragement to families who want to spend time with their children or plan diversity in experiences for them. Often demands for accountability in the short run seem to defeat long range goals. It seems likely that the money spent in maintaining a system which keeps track of the precise number of hours each child is in the center is in the long run more costly than paying the center a flat fee for services rendered.

The Future of School Age Day Care

The Essential Ingredients

Good day care for children of school age needs three kinds of resources: (1) Adults who can help children learn skills, understand how social systems work, and develop satisfying arenas of initiative where industry and competence are required to bring plans to fruition. (2) Spaces and places where things can happen. Older children need more square feet of space, not less, than younger children. A good school age program needs places for the development of a wide variety of physical skills, places where projects can be carried out over a long period of time (shared space often makes this impossible), quiet places free from intrusion, and places which are adequately equipped with tools and supplies to teach skills and craftsmanship. (3) Access to the community. It seems doubtful that the first two criteria could be met without some access to the community, because few programs can offer, within their narrow confines the variety of resources which a group of children with different talents, interests and developmental levels need to get a sense of themselves as capable of work, planning and commitment. This statement also implies that school age children need a community which is safe and permits them to circulate through it.

Who Should Be Eligible

At present most programs must accept or reject children according to the parent's income or employment status, rather than according to parental need or ability of the program to serve a particular child. Often parents who are in great need of care have no choice but to let their children fend on their own. A good system should provide care to those who need it. Many recreation programs could be used as additional resources for day care, but if this were accomplished by changing the eligibility so that current users would be barred, the solution would only add to the over-all problem of limited facilities for all school age children.

The Supervisory Function

A first priority of day care is to provide supervision for children. There seem to be three possibilities for building in the supervisory function: (1) Through direct supervision by a child care worker to whom the child reports and who is responsible for the child's activities. (2) Through supervision by someone in the neighborhood. This person might be a family day care mother

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who maintains the same type of close supervision as a worker in a group program, or it might be a neighbor or mother of a classmate to whom the child reports and discusses his plans for the remainder of the day. (3) Through remote supervision by the parent. It does not seem realistic to expect that all children will be directly supervised during their out-of-school hours. Especially as children grow older, many will rebel against close supervision and can safely and responsibly care for themselves. A very difficult problem for a working parent to solve is how to turn a child loose in a community which cannot constructively absorb children who are ready to explore and begin defining their relation to it.

Where Should Care Take Place?

The life of a school age child is inexorably centered around the public school. The elementary school in most communities is located within walking distance of a child's home, its location is known to everyone in the neighborhood and it is the place where children are when they need care (except possibly for summer, and then we found summer school being used for purposes of day care.) Although we found programs which had little interplay with the school, these programs were few in number and do not show much promise for being implemented on a large scale. The school seems to be the place where day care for school age children should find its focus.

Traditionally, the public school has not been much concerned with the child's life out of school. The expectation has been that the family will adjust and adapt to the school, not vice versa. Consequently, most schools have remained untouched by the changes which maternal employment and the increasing number of single parent families have brought to the lives of the children which they serve. Most schools offer little help to a working mother who is trying to make day care arrangements for her child. In fact, school officials often complicate family life by cavalierly announcing short days (so teachers can meet, etc.) or by changing children's hours of attendance to fit special reading programs.

We are suggesting that schools cannot continue to remain aloof from the social changes which have so radically altered the context in which they operate. Parents often are astounded to discover how little the schools their children attend differ from the ones which they knew. There are the same bells, the salute to the flag, reading groups, weekly spelling, penalties for tardiness, PTA meetings, etc. The vast changes which many parents see are the increases in the overall size of the school, the disappearance of the long lunch hour, the disappearance of the small neighborhood shops where children used to loiter and greet the shopkeeper going to and from school, the marked increase in numbers of children who move in and out of the neighborhood without ever becoming good friends or enemies, the disappearance of vacant lots where caves and shacks and bike tracks used to be built, the switch from letting children walk or take the streetcar to the library to driving them or not going at all. (After all, TV substitutes for the old reading time.)

All of these changes in the surrounding environment have worked to decrease opportunities for a child to have direct and personal contact with things and people. Perhaps it is time to redefine at least a part of the school's mission, and to work for ways to reintroduce other experiences which play a vital part in educating the whole child.

We have always argued for diversity in child care options, and again we argue for variety in opportunities for children and choice for parents. In proposing that school age day care should find its focus in the school, we are not proposing that its form be determined by school personnel. It is important that the child care aspect of a child's day should not be governed by the same administrative logic that rules the school's academic program.

Questions of control always seem to revert to funding practices. The models which we will propose could be funded in a variety of ways, through community youth serving agencies, through the school district or through 4-C or some other form of community coordination. We have seen good programs develop out of all these types of funding when the leadership was strong and there was freedom to employ talented enthusiastic staff 3/. This type of freedom implies, of course, that the non-academic program is administered through a separate channel and has the autonomy to develop its own guidelines.

Group Day Care in Conjunction With the School: Some Alternative Models

Day Care Housed Within the School

With the falling child population many elementary schools, for the first time in years, find

3/ We would not want to see a school district use child care as a dumping ground for its mediocre or surplus teachers.

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themselves with empty classrooms. In such schools day care can be housed within the school, using the school playground for the outdoor recreation area.

Funding could come through the school district or through an outside community agency 4/. When funding for such a program comes from the school district, the program staff may find it harder to get support for program thrusts which are clearly outside of school tradition, although this is not necessarily the case. Support systems for staff may work better if funding comes from another agency. Day care staff who have introduced such a program into a traditional school report that the school staff initially judge such a program by their established classroom standards. Typically, everyone from janitor to principal experiences culture shock to see rugs, pillows, hot plates and pop corn poppers replace desks and tidy bulletin boards. Attempts to turn a hall into a temporary play space inevitably meet with strong resistance (*But we can't let children run in the hall!*). Apparently, it takes a great deal of patience to gain acceptance for a program housed in a school. Acceptance appears to come more easily if the worker has had good training and is able to interpret sound principles of child development as a basis for the program. Acceptance is also related to the worker's tact and understanding of school traditions and their importance to teachers and maintenance staff. Strategies such as eating regularly in the teacher's lunch room and supplying the janitor with afternoon coffee are reported to pay off in the long run.

Despite the difficulties of implementing a program within a public school, such a program offers great possibilities for introducing change into the school system. Carl Bereiter (1972) has proposed a model for schools which seems to be a logical extension of housing a day care program in a public school. He suggests that schools might work better if they were divided into two parts with the academic skills separated from the life experience aspect of learning. In such a school, all students would be scheduled for a limited part of the day in the academic program, taught by teachers who had a special liking for and commitment to teaching skills which require regular practice and possibly a certain amount of rote learning. These teachers would not be expected to provide other experiences.

The larger part of a child's day would be spent in another part of the building with child care workers. These adults would have no repsonsibility for specific curriculum goals or for reading and math achievement scores. Their major responsibility would be to provide a rich and stimulating environment in which children could develop and pursue their own interests and a broad range of skills.

If a school were organized in this way, the resources which are so hard to obtain for a day care program would be available as part of the school setting. However, such a program needs space, and it is questionable whether it could be implemented in a school which provides only the minimum 20 square feet of space per child.

Day Care in a Separate Building or Adjacent to the School Grounds

For schools with no empty classrooms, there is the possibility of providing a separate building on the school playground. When the day care function is housed in a separate building, it is easier to implement a program which is entirely apart and separate from the school function. Conversely, the program usually has little impact on the elementary school.

Centers can also be near or adjacent to school buildings. If youth-serving agencies or churches are nearby, they might provide the program or merely provide the space. Once a building is officially off the school grounds it becomes freer from school influences. Centers under school district sponsorship which are not located in the school or on school grounds are still free from the burden of daily busing and often have the added advantage of being clearly identified by both children and administrators as a program totally separate from the school day.

The School As a Planning Center

The group program, as some of our case histories hopefully have demonstrated, can provide a rich, warm home base for a limited number of children. However, even the best program is limited in its resources; and many schools have more children needing care, or at least some structure to their out-of-school hours than the existing group programs can accommodate. Working mothers (and other parents too) could function more effectively and responsibly if the school took seriously its relationship to the child's life out of school. Parents do not have good access to information about the variety of choices which could be made for the child's after-school time. We have

4/ In California an occasional Children's Center program funded through a school district is housed in this way. In Portland, Oregon, many of the Latch Key programs funded through 4-C are housed in the schools.

already outlined many of the resources which are available, such as family day care homes, the recreational programs of youth-serving agencies -- classes in gymnastics, applied electricity, music lessons. Undoubtedly a community offers far more activities than those officially announced. Such activities could be located or new ones created if there were someone actively thinking about these needs and keeping in touch with other resource people.

A second resource which many parents need is a transportation system to get children from school to activities. If a school could provide some type of flexible jitney service which could drop children off at the art center, the library, Mrs. Jones' family day care home, at the connection to the crosstown bus, etc., children could take advantage of far more activities that would provide a meaningful match between potential talents and needed skills.

This model would need, in addition to the vehicles for transportation, at least one worker and an office -- perhaps an unused classroom which also provides a meeting place for children. The worker would need to know what school age children need and how to find resources in the community. In addition such a person should be a good matchmaker.

The School As a Community Center

A school which could offer both a group program housed in, at or near the school and a resource center could meet a wide variety of needs. For example, the group program might be especially suited to younger children who still found it exciting to be away from home and to play with friends in a warm, somewhat protected atmosphere.

The resource center could refer parents to family day care for children who needed more privacy to pursue special interests or found the long day with a group tiring or over-stimulating. And for older children, especially, the resource center could provide access to the community and to skills which could not be taught at the school.

When one starts to think of a full range of services which could be provided out of a school, the possibilities are endless. Many schools which have been organized as alternatives find it natural to stay open for 10 to 12 hours a day, building in day care almost inadvertently as they build in the range of experience that they want for children (Ford Foundation, 1974).

In school districts where classrooms have become surplus commodities one typical solution is to transfer students and to close a school as a means of cutting school district costs. It seems a pity that more creative uses are not being made of such schools. If such a school could continue to operate as a neighborhood school at perhaps 50 to 75% of its regular enrollment, the remainder of the space might then be used to bring community activities into the school. Suppose, for example, that such a school used some of its extra space for activity programs, work areas, and a resource office. Any remaining space might be made available to adult groups or individuals who wanted work space and would agree to spend their work time in a setting where watching, listening and some visiting was permitted on the part of school children.

Summary

In this study we have tried to describe the day care services which now exist and to focus on the adequacy of existing and potential services for meeting developmental needs. We began by citing Erik Erikson's description of the middle years as critical for the development of industry -- the individual's capacity for work. In closing we return to Erikson, who points out the importance of providing an environment which can safeguard the growth of children.

> *Man's ecology demands constant natural, historical, and technological readjustment, which makes it at once obvious that only a perpetual, if ever so imperceptible, restructuring of tradition can safeguard for each new generation of infants anything approaching an 'average expectability' of environment. Today, when rapid technological changes have taken the lead the world over, the matter of establishing and preserving in flexible forms 'an average expectable' continuity for child rearing and education everywhere has, in fact, become a matter of human survival (Erikson, 1968, p 222).*

The out-of-school life of school age children appears to be an area where there is a need for a restructuring of tradition to safeguard this stage of development. Day care planning which moves beyond slots to be provided and deals with the ecology of the school age child could play an important role in this restructuring.

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APPENDIX A

DIRECTOR INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Name_____
Address_____ Telephone_____
School age only_____
Nursery school combination_____

1. When was this center established?
2. Home many children are enrolled in this center?
3. What are their ages?
4. How are they grouped? (Clarify: numbers of children by age
5. Do you have a waiting list at this time of year? How many?
6. Can you give me some picture of the children and families you serve?
7. What are your procedures for enrolling a child in the center?
8. What are the things parents most often want to know about the program?
9. What are the things which you are most concerned that they understand about the program?
10. Do parents visit the program before they enroll their child or do they visit after the child is enrolled?
11. What is your fee schedule?

I'd like to get some idea of the services you offer?

12. Are you open all year round?
13. What are your hours?
14. How many meals or snacks do you serve?
    1. Are the meals prepared here?
15. What kinds of transportation do you have available?
    1. To and from school?
    2. Trips around the community?
    3. Trips outside the community?
    4. Emergency transportation?
16. What kinds of health services do you have?
    1. Do you require a physical exam on enrollment?
    2. Is there a procedure for keeping it up to date?
    3. Do you provide medical or dental services here at the center? (If yes on 3, what are these?)
    4. How do you handle accidents and injuries?
    5. Does anyone on your staff have special first aid training?
17. How about illness? Can a child stay at the center if he is not feeling well?
    1. Only until mother comes?
    2. Only for extended day hours?
    3. Can stay instead of going to school?
    4. Can stay if really ill?
    5. Criteria for sending home?
18. Do you provide counseling or social services? (Describe:)
    1. How do you handle it if a family needs medical care, other services, or help with family problems?
19. How do you handle it if a child has behavior or other problems which are causing you concern?

I'd like to know more about the staff who work with school age children.

20. How large is your staff? (Include maintenance, caretakers)
21. What is your staff-child ratio?
22. Could you give me a thumbnail sketch of each member of the staff? (Approximate age, sex, special talents, educational background)

Program:

23. What are your major goals for this program?
24. Could you describe your daily schedule for school age children?
    1. Does it differ much from day to day? (Specify)
    2. Can individual children make arrangements to participate in after school activities, scouting, visit friends?
    3. Does this happen very often?
25. I'd like to know about the differences between days when school is in session and vacation days?
    1. How does this work?
    2. Where do you get the extra staff hours?

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26. (For combination centers) Do you have children in extended day who were also in nursery school? About how many?
27. Is there much turnover of children between September and June?
28. Is there much turnover between the end of the school year and summer vacation?
29. Most children drop out of school age day care sometime between third and sixth grade. Could you tell me something about how this gets decided?
30. Does your staff have to take vacation any particular time of year?
31. What kind of contacts do you have with the child's elementary school?
    1. About how often do these occur?
    2. Do you have a picture of the child's relationship with his teacher?
32. What kinds of contacts do you have with the child's parents?
    1. About how often does this occur?
33. Do parents talk with you about their child's relationship with the school?
34. Do teachers and school personnel consult with you about individual children?
35. Do you take any responsibility for seeing that a child gets his homework done or understands the assignments?
36. Do children show you their report cards?
37. What things take a major part of your time?
38. What sorts of problems in the school age program take your time and attention?
39. What are the limitations you are up against in making this program work as you would wish?
40. Do you feel that you are able to achieve your goals for this program?
41. Is there anything you consider unique or unusual about this center, i.e., facilities, staff, program, type of child?
42. What are the things about school age programs that you feel are most important for Office of Child Development to understand?

Now, I'd like to get some information on you so we will know in what ways you are like or different from other directors in charge of school age programs.

43. How long have you been in charge of this center?
44. What special training have you had for this job?
45. Has this training been useful or have you had other training and experience which has been more helpful to you in doing this job?
46. For you, what is the most interesting and rewarding part of your job?
47. Are there any questions which you would like to ask of me?

SUMMER INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Center_____ Date_____
Address_____ Time_____ Observer_____

1. What is your schedule of activities for summer?
   Daily activities?
   Weekly activities?
   Specially scheduled activities?
2. Do children have a required nap or quiet time?
3. What is your summer fee schedule?
4. Out of your total summer enrollment how many children were in extended day during spring semester?
5. In what way do your staffing patterns for summer differ from those for the school year?
6. What is the most difficult aspect of summer programming?
7. What are the good things that happen in the summer
8. Does the very end of the summer differ in any particular way from the rest of the summer?

Summer Recreation Programs

Center_____ Date_____
Person contacted_____ Telephone_____

1. Do you have all day activities; for school age children? Meals?
2. Tell me more about your program.
3. Does it go on all summer?
   Every day?
   What hours? What is enrollment?
4. What is the cost of the program to the child?
5. Who is eligible to attend?
6. Do you have a brochure? If so, could you send me one?
7. How else do you get publicity for your program?
8. Do you have transportation available? What kind:
   For what use? Pick up children? Field trips?
9. If a mother works all day, and sends her child to your program, could she be sure he was there? Do you keep track of children?
10. How would a mother find out about your program?

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APPENDIX B

SPACE RATINGS

Center_____ Age group_____ Size_____

Date_____ Time_____ Place_____

INSIDE

_____ Number of insulated units

_____ Number of private spaces

Availability of storage
- 0 Can't rate_____
- 1-5 Closed to open_____

Order of storage
- 0 Can't rate_____
- 1-5 Messy to orderly_____

Arrangement of room
- 0 Can't rate_____
- 1 Insulated area_____
- 2 Straight line_____
- 3 Circumscribed activity areas_____
- 4 Open area (large dead space)_____

Softness
- Rugs_____
- Pillows, mattresses_____
- Cozy furniture (specify)_____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Indoor-outdoor availability
- 0 Can't rate_____
- 1 Both always available_____
- 2 Never available simultaneously_____
- 3 Other (describe)_____
- _____
- _____

OUTSIDE

Large muscle equipment (list)
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Swings_____
Sand_____
Dirt_____
Trees_____
Grass_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

INSIDE AND OUTSIDE

Affectionate touching_____

Animals (list)_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Please make sketch of area:

00118

APPENDIX C

OBSERVATION RECORD

Center HAMISH CENTER | Observation AM 1 2 3 | PM (1) 2 3

Date MAY 8, 1973 | Age Group 1ST THRU 3RD | Size 42

Place IN AND OUTDOORS | Time 2:25 | Obs. T.D.

Social Structure	Activity	List: Rules and sanctions
7	PAINTING WITH "NICE" EASEL PAINTS AND SMALL BRUSHES AT TABLE	
1+1*	BOY WEAVING WITH LEATHER STRIPS	
AA 10	PLAYING REAL BASEBALL	
3+1	CLIMBING JUNGLE GYM	
3	ON RINGS	
2	ON ACTING BARS	
2	PLAYING SOCCER- KICK BALL	
3	VISITING ON GRASS	
2+1	CAROM BOARD	
A 3	BEING COLLECTED BY ADULT	
A 3	BOUNCING BALL AND TALKING TO A	

Adults

2 ♂ HELPING BOYS PLAY BASEBALL

1 ♀ TALKING W/ CHILDREN

1 ♀ ACTIVELY SUPERVISING.

* Note: The plus numbers indicate number of children who are watching the activity - i.e., Three children are climbing the jungle gym, one child is watching them climb.

Pacific Oaks
Research Department

00119

APPENDIX D

Reliability of the Observation Schedule

Two types of reliability checks were made. The first type checked the ability of the observers to code recorded protocols reliably. Each of five observations was recorded by a different observer and coded by all other observers.

Percent of Agreement on the Coding of Five Recorded Protocols Containing 49 Episodes

Category		% Complete Agreement	% Some Disagreement	% Disagreement
Type of activity	(N=285)*	92.2%	6.6%	1.0%
Social structure	(N-216)	96.3	3.7	0.0
Adult initiative	(N=216)	79.6	18.1	2.3
Age level	(N=216)	64.8	29.0	6.2
Continuity	(N=176)	77.2	21.0	0.0
Child initiative	(N=176)	71.0	24.4	4.5
Equipment,	(N=176)	84.1	14.2	1.7
Adult know-how	(N=176)	84.1	15.3	0.5

The second type of reliability checked the amount of congruence between final codings of paired observers who recorded and coded their own observations. We consider this type of reliability to be more important and found that this condition produced higher reliability than the first type.

Percent of Agreement on 11 Paired Observations

Category	% of Agreement
Out of activity	89.4%
Limited range activity	90.8
Full range activity	94.6
Social structure	90.4
Adult initiative	78.1
Age level	90.3
Continuity	85.3
Child initiative	86.0
Equipment	87.7
Adult know-how	88.4

The major difficulty encountered in establishing reliability with this type of coding is that in the relatively open environment of school age day care some activity settings are volatile and are not caught by paired observers unless they record settings in exactly the same order and record at the same speed.

* The N is computed by multiplying the number of episodes (4) by the number of observers (6). For a few episodes only five observers coded. The N is smaller for those categories which are only coded if the activity qualifies as a full range, as opposed to simple or limited range.

00120

APPENDIX E

CENTER MORNING VS CENTER AFTERNOON

		A.M. (N=168)	P.M. (N=647)
Out of activity	In transition	10.1%	9.0%
	Self-care	2.4	3.7
	Horsing around	4.2	4.6
	Watching	4.2	2.3
	Restriction	0.6	2.0
	Other	1.2	3.2
Limited range	***Watching TV or movies	3.6	0.3
	Eating as an activity	1.2	1.9
	Reading	4.2	2.5
	Listening	1.2	0.8
	Conversation, discussion	7.7	7.9
Full range	**Academic homework	3.6	0.6
	Doing work	5.4	3.4
	Exploring	7.1	7.4
	Construction with commercial materials	1.8	1.9
	Arts and crafts	12.5	9.6
	***Sports	8.9	23.0
	Games	11.3	7.3
	Dramatic play	8.3	7.3
	Music, dance	.6	1.4
Social structure	***No adult present	89.3	75.5
	***One or more adults present	10.7	24.3
	Child alone	41.7	41.4
	Small group (3 - 5 children)	51.2	48.5
	Large group (6 - 10 children)	4.8	7.4
	Extra large (11 or more)	2.4	2.6
Adult initiative	*Little adult initiative	63.1	54.3
	Some adult initiative	10.7	14.8
	Much adult initiative	3.6	5.9
Activity age level	Nursery school (age 2 - 4)	8.9	14.1
	Nursery - kindergarten (4 - 5)	14.3	15.9
	Early school age (6 - 8)	25.0	26.0
	**Later school age (9 - 13)	6.0	2.0
	Work performed by all ages	5.4	3.9
Continuity	Little continuity	43.5	36.3
	***Some continuity	10.7	22.1
	Much continuity	5.4	3.4
Child initiative	Little child initiative	23.2	18.2
	Some child initiative	29.2	34.3
	Much child initiative	7.1	9.3
Equipment, supplies	Usual equipment	46.4	41.4
	Some unusual equipment	11.3	17.3
	Elaborate equipment, supplies	1.2	3.1
Adult know-how	Little adult know-how	50.6	43.9
	**Some adult know-how	5.4	14.1
	Much adult know-how	3.6	3.9

* Significant at .05 level; **, .01 level; ***, .001 level.

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APPENDIX F

CENTER MORNING AND AFTERNOON (WINTER) VS CENTER SUMMER

		Winter (N=815)	Summer (N=472)
Out of activity	*In transition	9.2%	5.9%
	Self-care	3.4	4.7
	Horsing around	4.5	3.4
	Watching	2.7	2.1
	Restriction	1.7	1.3
	Other	2.8	2.1
Limited range	Watching TV or movies	1.0	0.0
	Eating as an activity	1.7	0.4
	Reading	2.8	1.1
	Listening	0.9	1.9
	*Conversation, discussion	7.9	4.2
Full range	Academic homework	1.2	1.1
	**Doing work	3.8	7.2
	Exploring	7.4	5.7
	Construction with commercial materials	1.8	2.1
	Arts and crafts	10.2	13.8
	*Sports	20.1	15.5
	***Games	8.1	15.0
	Dramatic play	7.5	10.6
	Music, dance	1.2	1.9
Social structure	***No adult present	78.5	64.2
	***One or more adults present	21.5	35.8
	***Child alone	41.5	30.9
	Small group (3 - 5 children)	49.1	54.0
	Large group (6 - 10 children)	6.9	8.7
	***Extra large (11 or more)	2.6	6.4
Adult initiative	Little adult initiative	56.1	54.7
	Some adult initiative	14.0	17.2
	*Much adult initiative	5.4	8.7
Activity age level	Nursery school (age 2 - 4)	13.0	15.9
	Nursery - kindergarten (4 - 5)	15.6	18.9
	Early school age (6 - 8)	25.8	28.6
	Later school age (9 - 13)	2.8	3.4
	Work performed by all ages	4.2	6.1
Continuity	Little Continuity	37.8	36.4
	***Some continuity	19.8	30.3
	Much continuity	3.8	6.1
Child Initiative	Little child initiative	19.3	22.5
	Some child initiative	33.3	38.6
	Much child initiative	8.8	11.9
Equipment, supplies	Usual equipment	42.5	43.9
	Some unusual equipment	16.1	18.2
	***Elaborate equipment, supplies	2.7	10.8
Adult know-how	*Little adult know-how	45.3	51.5
	**Some adult know-how	12.3	17.6
	Much adult know-how	3.8	3.6

* Significant at .05 level; **, .01 level; ***, .001 level.

99122

APPENDIX G

YEAR AROUND DAY CARE VS SUMMER-ONLY

		Summer Center (N=472)	Summer-only (N=355)
Out of activity	*In transition	5.9%	9.9%
	Self-care	4.7	2.5
	***Horsing around	3.4	0.0
	Watching	2.1	2.5
	Restriction	1.3	0.0
	Other	2.1	2.8
Limited range	*Watching TV or movie	0.0	1.4
	Eating as an activity	0.4	0.6
	Reading	1.1	3.1
	Listening	1.9	3.7
	Conversation, discussion	4.2	4.2
Full range	***Academic homework	1.1	5.4
	Doing work	7.2	4.8
	Exploring	5.7	5.4
	Construction with commercial materials	2.1	2.8
	Arts and crafts	13.8	15.8
	Sports	15.5	17.7
	Games	15.0	14.4
	***Dramatic play	10.6	0.8
	Music, dance	1.9	2.3
Social structure	No adult present	64.2	66.2
	One or more adults present	35.8	33.8
	Child alone	30.9	27.9
	Small group (3 - 5 children)	54.0	48.5
	**Large group (6 - 10 children)	8.7	15.5
	Extra large (11 or more)	6.4	8.2
Adult initiative	***Little adult initiative	54.7	42.8
	**Some adult initiative	17.2	25.6
	*Much adult initiative	8.7	13.8
Activity age level	***Nursery school (age 2 - 4)	15.9	8.2
	Nursery - Kindergarten (4 - 5)	18.9	14.6
	Early school age (6 - 8)	28.6	28.7
	***Later school age (9 - 13)	3.4	13.8
	Work performed by all ages	6.1	3.9
Continuity	***Little continuity	36.4	21.4
	**Some continuity	30.3	40.6
	Much continuity	6.1	7.3
Child initiative	Little child initiative	22.5	18.3
	Some child initiative	38.6	40.0
	Much child initiative	11.9	11.0
Equipment, supplies	**Usual equipment	43.9	34.1
	Some unusual equipment	18.2	18.0
	**Elaborate equipment, supplies	10.8	17.2
Adult know-how	***Little adult know-how	51.5	39.7
	Some adult know-how	17.6	20.3
	**Much adult know-how	3.6	9.0

* Significant at .05 level; **, .01 level; ***, .001 level.

00199

Frequency of Occurrence of Activity Setting Variables in Each Center

(N=1642)

VARIABLES	Valley Family Center	Contract Center - DPSS - B.	Contract Center - DPSS - C	Olvera St. Community Center	Children's Center, Ext. Day - A	Surf Blvd.	Children's Center, Ext. Day - C.	Children's Center, Ext. Day - D	Children's Center, Ext. Day - E	Children's Center, Comb. - A.	Children's Center, Comb. - B.	Valley View Children's Center	Children's Center, Comb. - D.	Children's Center, Comb. - E.	Mrs. A's	Mr. T's Club
Out of Activity																
In transition	9.6%	6.1%	0.0%	4.9%	8.6%	7.1%	4.3%	5.9%	2.5%	0.0%	9.1%	5.3%	3.5%	4.3%	8.3%	8.5%
Self-care	5.8	18.4	0.0	1.6	4.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.5	3.2	0.0	2.6	0.0	2.2	6.3	3.4
Horsing around	9.6	0.0	0.0	6.6	1.9	4.8	6.5	5.9	2.5	0.0	4.5	0.0	3.5	2.2	4.2	6.8
Watching	7.7	4.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.1
Restriction	0.0	2.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.4	0.0	5.9	0.0	0.0	6.8	0.0	0.0	2.2	2.1	0.0
Other	0.0	0.0	4.8	0.0	1.9	2.4	2.2	2.9	7.5	0.0	0.0	2.6	3.5	4.3	6.3	3.4
Limited Range																
Watching TV or movies	1.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.5	0.0	2.3	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
Eating as an activity	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.6	1.9	0.0	2.2	2.9	2.5	6.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.1	0.0
Reading	5.8	8.2	23.8	0.0	1.0	2.4	4.3	0.0	2.5	0.0	0.0	2.6	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
Listening	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.6	4.8	0.0	2.2	0.0	0.0	12.9	0.0	1.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Conversation, discussion	3.8	4.1	0.0	4.9	8.6	9.5	10.9	2.9	2.5	6.5	6.8	7.9	3.5	4.3	0.0	13.6
Full Range																
Academic, homework	1.9	2.0	0.0	3.3	0.0	7.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.7
Doing work	9.6	0.0	0.0	6.6	1.9	2.4	4.3	11.8	12.5	3.2	2.3	6.6	17.5	21.7	0.0	0.0
Exploring	11.5	4.1	9.5	19.7	1.9	7.1	2.3	11.8	5.0	0.0	9.1	3.9	8.8	8.7	10.4	1.7
Construction with commercial materials	3.8	10.2	9.5	3.3	0.0	2.4	0.0	0.0	2.5	0.0	0.0	5.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Arts and crafts	0.0	8.2	0.0	19.7	20.0	4.8	26.1	5.9	17.5	19.4	9.1	19.7	10.5	13.0	0.0	1.7
Sports	7.7	20.4	0.0	18.0	21.9	16.7	21.7	11.8	2.5	0.0	20.5	13.2	17.5	17.4	27.1	39.0
Games	13.5	6.1	9.5	4.9	10.5	19.0	4.3	20.6	27.5	35.5	6.8	10.5	14.0	6.5	8.3	6.8
Dramatic play	7.7	2.0	42.9	3.3	6.7	9.5	8.7	11.8	5.0	12.9	15.9	14.5	14.0	10.9	20.8	8.5
Music, dance	0.0	4.1	0.0	0.0	2.9	2.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.8	3.9	0.0	2.2	4.2	0.0
Adult Involved	36.5	20.4	14.3	47.5	26.7	33.3	28.2	29.4	50.0	25.8	29.5	42.1	31.6	54.3	16.7	8.2
Social Structure																
Child alone	13.5	24.5	42.9	24.6	13.3	33.3	34.8	20.6	15.0	22.6	27.3	22.4	22.8	15.2	22.9	10.2
Two children	21.2	20.4	28.6	16.4	27.6	26.2	23.9	23.5	20.0	19.4	25.0	25.0	31.6	26.1	12.5	16.9
Small group (3 - 5 children)	19.2	18.4	23.8	27.9	28.6	23.8	13.0	29.4	30.0	22.6	15.9	31.6	28.1	34.8	29.2	28.8
Large group (6 - 10 children)	3.9	6.1	0.0	18.0	7.6	0.0	8.7	5.9	15.0	29.0	11.4	9.2	7.0	6.5	6.2	13.5
Extra large (11 or more)	9.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.7	0.0	6.5	0.0	2.5	3.2	0.0	1.3	0.0	2.2	2.1	3.4

00124

Frequency of Occurrence of Activity Settings Variables in Each Center

	Valley Family Center	Contract Center - DPSS - B	Contract Center - DPSS - C.	Olvera St. Community Center	Children's Center, Ext. Day - A	Surf Blvd.	Children's Center, Ext. Day - C	Children's Center, Ext. Day - D	Children's Center, Ext. Day - E.	Children's Center, Comb. - A.	Children's Center, Comb. - B.	Valley View Children's Center	Children's Center, Comb. - D.	Children's Center, Comb. - E.	Mrs. A's	Mr. T's Club
Adult Initiative																
Little	32.7%	44.9%	95.2%	55.7%	58.1%	61.9%	50.0%	55.9%	32.5%	90.3%	52.3%	56.6%	45.6%	37.0%	64.6%	69.5%
Some	32.7	20.4	0.0	16.4	22.9	14.4	26.1	23.5	30.0	6.5	20.5	22.4	29.8	15.2	8.3	0.0
Much	1.9	2.0	0.0	14.8	1.9	4.8	10.9	0.0	20.0	0.0	6.8	10.5	14.0	32.6	0.0	3.4
Activity Age Level																
Nursery School (2-4)	0.0	30.6	52.4	29.5	13.3	0.0	15.2	14.7	2.5	16.1	11.4	5.3	7.0	10.9	20.8	5.1
Nursery - Kindergarten (4-5)	11.5	14.3	19.0	11.5	10.5	11.9	15.2	20.6	5.0	22.6	11.4	11.8	22.8	17.4	25.0	18.6
Early School age (6-8)	30.8	12.2	0.0	24.6	34.3	42.9	26.1	26.5	55.0	25.8	43.2	53.9	35.1	26.1	25.0	27.1
Later School Age (9-13)	3.8	0.0	0.0	6.6	5.7	11.9	6.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.3	0.0	7.0	4.3	0.0	8.5
Work performed all ages	9.6	0.0	0.0	6.6	1.9	4.8	4.3	11.8	10.0	6.5	2.3	6.6	10.5	21.7	0.0	0.0
Continuity																
Little	17.3	40.8	66.7	55.7	26.7	28.6	39.1	47.1	20.0	45.2	38.6	21.1	38.6	39.1	52.1	39.0
Some	30.8	16.3	4.8	9.8	35.2	40.5	17.4	23.5	37.5	22.6	25.0	43.4	38.6	39.1	10.4	18.6
Much	7.7	0.0	0.0	13.1	3.8	2.4	10.9	2.9	15.0	3.2	6.8	13.2	5.3	2.2	8.3	1.7
Child Initiative																
Little	3.8	22.4	4.8	26.2	10.5	16.8	32.6	32.4	7.5	16.1	9.1	13.2	10.5	28.3	18.9	22.0
Some	40.4	16.3	66.7	32.8	40.0	33.3	19.6	32.4	52.5	54.8	54.5	50.0	57.9	47.8	27.1	35.6
Much	11.5	18.4	0.0	19.7	15.2	21.4	15.2	8.8	12.5	0.0	6.8	14.5	14.0	4.3	25.0	1.7
Equipment, Supplies																
Usual	19.2	53.1	52.4	59.0	49.5	40.5	39.1	38.2	32.5	64.5	43.2	27.6	12.3	39.1	60.4	54.2
Some unusual	23.1	4.1	19.0	18.0	16.2	26.2	23.9	29.4	22.5	6.5	25.0	23.7	50.9	32.6	10.4	3.4
Elaborate equipment	13.5	0.0	0.0	1.6	0.0	4.8	4.3	5.9	17.5	0.0	2.3	26.3	19.3	8.7	0.0	1.7
Adult Know-how																
Little	30.8	51.0	71.4	54.1	47.6	45.2	39.1	58.8	42.5	67.7	52.3	46.1	40.4	37.0	54.2	54.2
Some	21.2	6.1	0.0	21.3	14.3	19.0	21.7	11.8	17.5	3.2	9.1	31.6	33.3	19.6	16.7	3.4
Much	3.8	0.0	0.0	3.3	2.9	7.1	6.5	2.9	12.5	0.0	9.1	0.0	8.8	23.9	0.0	1.7

001125

Frequency of Occurrence of Activity Settings Variables in Each Center

VARIABLES	Mrs. D's	Chevron	Western Ave. Sports Club	Proprietary, Ext. day, comb.-A.	Proprietary, Ext. day, comb.-B.	Proprietary, Ext. Day, comb.-C.	Valley View Center	The Club House	Proprietary, Non-profit - A.	Proprietary, Non-profit - B.	Aviation Blvd.	Desert City Self-Help League	United Christian Center	Private Day Camp - C.	Private Day Camp - A.	Private Day Camp - B.
Out of Activity																
In transition	10.2%	8.3%	10.9%	0.0%	3.6%	17.8%	11.1%	5.0%	19.2%	11.1%	6.7%	8.7%	0.0%	0.0%	16.7%	10.0%
Self-care	12.2	0.0	10.9	9.1	3.6	2.7	0.0	0.0	4.0	0.0	0.0	13.0	0.0	8.3	6.7	0.0
Horsing around	6.1	0.0	4.3	9.1	7.1	4.1	11.1	0.0	7.1	3.7	6.7	0.0	6.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
Watching	2.0	0.0	2.2	0.0	3.6	8.2	0.0	0.0	10.1	7.4	6.7	0.0	0.0	8.3	0.0	3.3
Restriction	2.0	4.2	2.2	0.0	0.0	5.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	11.1	0.0	0.0	3.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other	0.0	4.2	0.0	0.0	3.6	2.7	0.0	0.0	7.1	3.7	0.0	0.0	3.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Limited Range																
Watching TV or movies	0.0	0.0	2.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Eating as an activity	0.0	0.0	4.3	0.0	3.6	1.4	11.1	0.0	0.0	3.7	0.0	4.3	0.0	8.3	0.0	0.0
Reading	2.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.1	2.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.3	6.3	8.3	0.0	0.0
Listening	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.3
Conversation, discussion	6.1	12.5	8.7	18.2	14.3	1.4	0.0	2.5	13.1	7.4	0.0	0.0	3.1	0.0	6.7	16.7
Full Range																
Academic, homework	0.0	0.0	0.0	18.2	3.6	2.7	0.0	0.0	1.0	3.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.3	0.0
Doing work	8.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.7	0.0	17.5	1.0	0.0	0.0	4.3	0.0	8.3	0.0	0.0
Exploring	4.1	12.5	0.0	9.1	3.6	8.2	11.1	0.0	7.1	0.0	6.7	8.7	21.9	16.7	6.7	16.7
Construction with commercial materials	2.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.7	0.0	2.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.3	9.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
Arts and crafts	20.4	4.2	13.0	9.1	0.0	12.3	22.2	0.0	2.0	11.1	33.3	13.0	25.0	8.3	13.3	16.7
Sports	12.2	50.0	17.4	18.2	32.1	16.4	0.0	0.0	25.3	22.2	33.3	17.4	15.6	16.7	46.7	23.3
Games	6.1	4.2	19.6	0.0	10.7	0.0	22.2	47.5	0.0	7.4	0.0	4.3	6.3	16.7	0.0	10.0
Dramatic play	0.0	0.0	4.3	9.1	3.6	5.5	11.1	20.0	2.0	0.0	6.7	17.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Music, dance	6.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Adult Involved	26.5	41.7	32.6	27.3	10.7	16.4	44.4	7.5	4.0	18.6	33.3	13.0	28.1	33.3	43.4	40.0
Social Structure																
Child alone	26.5	12.5	8.7	45.5	32.1	24.7	22.2	37.5	12.1	14.8	26.7	39.1	43.8	41.7	33.3	26.7
Two children	12.2	20.8	10.9	9.1	17.9	21.9	22.2	27.5	12.1	25.9	13.3	17.4	12.5	16.7	6.7	13.3
Small group (3 - 5 children)	18.4	37.5	21.7	9.1	21.4	9.6	11.1	22.5	19.2	0.0	40.0	17.4	31.3	16.7	13.3	23.3
Large group (6 - 10 children)	0.0	0.0	6.5	18.2	7.1	1.3	22.2	5.0	6.1	3.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.3	20.0	20.0
Extra large (11 or more)	10.2	16.7	21.7	0.0	0.0	1.3	0.0	2.5	3.0	18.5	0.0	4.3	0.0	0.0	3.3	3.3

Frequency of Occurrence of Activity Settings Variables in Each Center

	Mrs. D's	Chevron	Western Ave. Sports Club	Proprietary, Ext. Day, comb.-A.	Proprietary, Ext. Day, comb.-B.	Proprietary, Ext. day, comb.-C.	Valley View Center	The Club House	Proprietary, Non-profit - A.	Proprietary, Non-profit - B.	Aviation Blvd.	Desert City Self-Help League	United Christian Center	Private Day Camp - C.	Private Day Camp - A.	Private Day Camp - B.
Adult Initiative																
Little	42.9%	58.3%	47.8%	45.5%	78.6%	58.9%	55.6%	85.0%	51.5%	48.1%	53.3%	65.2%	56.3%	41.7%	30.0%	46.7%
Some	8.2	25.0	15.2	36.4	0.0	0.0	22.2	10.0	1.0	0.0	26.7	13.0	15.6	25.0	30.0	36.7
Much	16.3	4.2	6.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	14.8	0.0	0.0	15.6	16.7	16.7	3.3
Activity Age Level																
Nursery School (2-4)	4.1	33.3	4.3	0.0	17.9	27.4	0.0	20.0	16.2	22.2	6.7	26.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	26.7
Nursery - Kindergarten (4-5)	26.5	4.2	8.7	18.2	21.4	19.2	55.6	30.0	11.1	0.0	40.0	13.0	56.3	41.7	13.3	23.3
Early School Age (6-8)	20.4	25.0	34.8	45.5	10.7	1.4	11.1	20.0	10.0	22.2	26.7	26.1	21.9	25.0	56.7	13.3
Later School Age (9-13)	0.0	8.3	6.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	6.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.3
Work Performed All Ages	8.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.6	2.7	0.0	17.5	1.0	0.0	0.0	4.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Continuity																
Little	24.5	41.7	19.6	36.4	53.6	46.6	22.2	60.0	34.3	33.3	53.3	56.5	37.5	0.0	46.7	43.3
Some	34.7	29.2	28.3	27.3	0.0	4.1	44.4	27.5	5.1	3.7	26.7	13.0	31.3	58.3	13.3	20.0
Much	0.0	0.0	6.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.4	0.0	0.0	9.4	8.3	10.0	3.3
Child Initiative																
Little	32.7	45.8	13.0	9.1	21.4	38.4	0.0	15.0	26.3	29.6	46.7	26.1	15.6	8.3	30.0	20.0
Some	22.4	20.8	39.1	54.5	32.1	11.0	66.7	65.0	11.1	14.8	20.0	34.8	31.3	50.0	33.3	40.0
Much	4.1	4.2	2.2	0.0	0.0	1.4	0.0	7.5	2.0	0.0	13.3	8.7	31.3	8.3	6.7	6.7
Equipment, Supplies																
Usual	38.8	54.2	17.4	27.3	46.4	46.6	44.4	70.0	37.4	29.6	73.3	65.2	56.3	58.3	13.3	43.3
Some unusual	20.4	12.5	10.9	18.2	7.1	4.1	22.2	17.5	1.0	14.8	6.7	4.3	21.9	8.3	13.3	20.0
Elaborate equipment	0.0	4.2	26.1	18.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	43.3	3.3
Adult Know-how																
Little	30.6	58.3	34.8	45.5	53.6	50.7	55.6	75.0	39.4	37.0	40.0	52.2	56.3	33.3	40.0	46.7
Some	24.5	0.0	15.2	18.2	0.0	0.0	11.1	12.5	0.0	7.4	33.3	17.4	21.9	33.3	16.7	20.0
Much	4.1	12.5	4.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	13.3	0.0

00127

Frequency of Occurrence of Activity Settings
Variables in Each Center

VARIABLES	City Recreation Dept. - A.	Elementary School - A.	Elementary School - B.	City Recreation Dept. - B.	Elementary School - C.	Catholic Day Camp	Jewish Community Center	Catholic Boys Club	Boys Club	Non-profit Community Center	Girls Club	YWCA	Non-profit Day Camp
Out of Activity													
In transition	7.7%	3.6%	23.4%	0.0%	0.0%	21.1%	0.0	0.0	10.5	0.0	13.6	0.0	0.0
Self-care	3.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.7	18.2	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Horsing around	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Watching	0.0	0.0	12.8	0.0	0.0	5.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Restriction	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.3	0.0	0.0	14.0	0.0	4.5	0.0	0.0
Limited Range													
Watching TV or movies	0.0	7.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.5	0.0	4.5	0.0	0.0
Eating as an activity	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Reading	3.8	7.1	6.4	0.0	16.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	9.1	0.0	0.0
Listening	3.8	3.6	2.1	3.4	8.3	0.0	30.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Conversation, discussion	3.8	0.0	6.4	3.4	8.3	0.0	4.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.5	0.0	0.0
Full Range													
Academic, homework	0.0	7.1	29.8	0.0	16.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Doing work	7.7	7.1	2.1	13.8	8.3	5.3	0.0	0.0	1.8	0.0	18.2	0.0	0.0
Exploring	3.8	0.0	0.0	3.4	0.0	0.0	34.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Construction with commercial materials	0.0	25.0	2.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Arts and crafts	19.2	21.4	12.8	6.9	25.0	52.6	0.0	9.1	15.8	0.0	13.6	0.0	50.0
Sports	15.4	0.0	0.0	51.7	0.0	5.3	21.7	45.5	12.3	50.0	4.5	20.0	0.0
Games	15.4	17.9	2.1	13.8	16.7	0.0	0.0	27.3	35.1	0.0	22.7	40.0	0.0
Dramatic play	3.8	0.0	0.0	3.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	0.0
Music, dance	11.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.3	0.0	0.0	1.8	0.0	4.5	20.0	50.0
Adult Involved	46.1	10.7	17.1	37.9	25.0	42.1	69.6	36.4	22.8	50.0	31.8	60.0	100.0
Social Structure													
Child alone	23.1	28.6	17.0	0.0	41.7	0.0	4.3	9.1	14.0	0.0	22.7	0.0	0.0
Two children	23.1	35.7	14.9	37.9	33.3	0.0	17.4	27.3	42.1	0.0	31.8	20.0	0.0
Small group (3 - 5 children)	15.4	14.3	17.0	34.5	8.3	21.1	17.4	18.2	10.5	0.0	13.6	0.0	0.0
Large group (6 - 10 children)	15.4	17.9	10.6	17.2	8.3	42.1	13.0	0.0	3.5	100.0	4.5	80.0	50.0
Extra large (11 or more)	11.5	0.0	4.3	10.3	8.3	5.3	39.1	27.3	3.5	0.0	9.0	0.0	50.0

09128

Frequency of Occurrence of Activity Settings Variables in Each Center

(N=1642)

	City Recreation Dept. - A.	Elementar School - A.	Elementary School - B.	City Recreation Dept. - B.	Elementary School - C.	Catholic Day Camp	Jewish Community Center	Catholic Boys Club	Boys Club	Non-profit Community Center	Girls Club	YWCA	Non-profit Day Camp
Adult Initiative													
Little	46.2%	60.7%	27.7%	69.0%	41.7%	31.6%	26.1%	54.5%	43.9%	100.0%	36.4%	80.0%	0.0%
Some	34.6	35.7	21.3	17.2	25.0	36.8	4.3	27.3	15.8	0.0	36.4	20.0	100.0
Much	7.7	0.0	14.9	13.8	33.3	0.0	60.9	0.0	14.0	0.0	9.1	0.0	0.0
Activity Age Level													
Nursery School (2-4)	15.4	3.6	4.3	17.2	0.0	26.3	0.0	0.0	1.8	0.0	9.1	20.0	0.0
Nursery - Kindergarten (4-5)	19.2	28.6	17.0	0.0	25.0	26.3	0.0	0.0	1.8	50.0	4.5	60.0	50.0
Early School Age (6-8)	34.6	25.0	21.3	48.3	16.7	10.5	56.5	27.3	21.1	0.0	27.3	0.0	0.0
Later School Age (9-13)	0.0	14 3	4.3	13.7	16.7	5.3	0.0	54.6	43.9	0.0	9.1	20.0	50.0
Work Performed All Ages	7.7	7.1	2.1	13.8	8.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.8	0.0	13.6	0.0	0.0
Continuity													
Little	26.9	39.3	12.8	27.6	25.0	15.8	8.7	27.3	5.3	50.0	4.5	20.0	0.0
Some	38.5	39.3	21.3	62.1	0.0	52.6	47.8	36.4	63.2	0.0	54.5	80.0	50.0
Much	11.5	0.0	14.9	3.4	41.7	0.0	0.0	18.2	1.8	0.0	4.5	0.0	50.0
Child Initiative													
Little	38.5	3.6	14.9	17.2	33.3	36.8	26.1	9.1	1.8	0.0	18.2	20.0	100.0
Some	30.8	75.0	34.0	65.5	16.7	31.6	30.4	63.6	26.3	50.0	36.4	80.0	0.0
Much	7.7	0.0	0.0	10.3	16.7	0.0	0.0	9.1	42.1	0.0	9.1	0.0	0.0
Equipment, Supplies													
Usual	57.7	35.7	44.7	31.0	66.7	47.4	0.0	0.0	17.5	50.0	40.9	60.0	100.0
Some unusual	19.2	39.3	2.1	41.4	0.0	21.1	0.0	45.5	17.5	0.0	13.6	40.0	0.0
Elaborate equipment	0.0	3.6	2.1	20.7	0.0	0.0	56.5	36.4	35.1	0.0	9.1	0.0	0.0
Adult Know-how													
Little	38.5	64.3	21.3	58.6	33.3	36.8	13.0	54.5	42.1	50.0	36.4	60.0	0.0
Some	34.6	10.7	25.5	10.3	33.3	31.6	0.0	0.0	24.6	0.0	13.6	40.0	50.0
Much	3.8	3.6	2.1	24.1	0.0	0.0	43.5	27.3	1.8	0.0	13.6	0.0	50.0

00129